

The
MAGIC
of
DRESS

**GRACE
MARGARET
GOULD**



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THE MAGIC OF DRESS





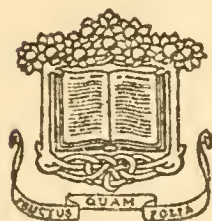
"Holding the glass to fashion"

THE MAGIC OF DRESS

BY

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ILLUSTRATED BY
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TO MY MOTHER

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THE MAGIC OF DRESS

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CHAPTER I

DRESS AS IT IS DEVELOPING

MUCH has been said about the folly and frivolity of woman's dress. But let us think for a moment — perhaps her dress is not as silly and frivolous as it is said to be.

Take the prehistoric cave-woman. Her clothes consisted of an uncured skin of some wild animal. It was raw and unpleasant to look at and had, you may be sure, no subtle sachel concealed about it. It was far from durable, for the rains would stiffen it and the heat would cause it to decay. And as for the style — well, that didn't count, for no other woman was any better off. It served the sole purpose of protection, but covered her less and became her not so well as it had the beast from whom it had been torn.

So much for the dress of the so-called golden age.

Now take the fashionable woman of to-day, on her way to the opera, for instance. She is wrapped in sable furs. These priceless pelts have been cured, dressed, and matched. They will last so long that they may be handed down as heirlooms in her family. They have been adjusted to her figure. They have been adapted to her individual style. Never did they fit and suit the little creatures from whom they were stripped so perfectly as they fit and suit her.

Let us look at the details of their making. They are lined with the richest of satins, silks, and chiffons. The prehistoric woman never could have dreamed of such dainty textures, but gradually through the ages her daughters came to require and expect them. And what woman has asked for she has generally received.

Think of the wars that have been waged, and the ships that have been built, and the journeys that have been made, and the men that have toiled and died in order that these fabrics might be at woman's command. Such, indeed, is the progress of the human race.

These sable furs, too, are wadded with cotton. Perhaps the prehistoric woman may have

plucked a cotton boll for the little urchin toddling behind her to play with, but she had no more idea of the possibilities of warmth and comfort concealed within it than the child had.

Gradually, as woman came to demand a fabric at once light, flexible, and warm, cotton was cultivated and its fibres were spun into cloth. Think of the employment for countless thousands and the wealth for countless generations that have come from this manufacture of cotton goods.

And then there is the thread with which the pelts are bound together. Is there any single article of manufacture that has been so useful to humanity as thread? Why, the needle that sprang into use at the same time is in a way a symbol of home, and all the pretty and sacred associations of home are strung like gems upon the thread.

Then, oftentimes, these furs are elaborately decorated. They have jewelled buckles of great value, they have frills of rare lace and loops of silken cords. These do not add to the warmth of the garment but they make it and the wearer more beautiful. Thus to gain beauty has become one of the objects of woman's dress.

This feminine beauty so adorned is an inspiration. As it has gained in refinement, so has the race become more cultivated. The savage wooer of the prehistoric woman knocked her down with a club and bore her off to his lair. The modern wooer approaches his lady love as if she were a queen and through her favour feels himself become noble.

What, then, do these two extreme types, the prehistoric woman in her skins and the modern lady in her furs, teach?

They teach that clothes, first and always, are made to cover and protect. They teach that as the race has progressed, clothes have improved. They teach, furthermore, that the desire for better clothes has been an inspiration to further progress. They teach that dignity and deference have come to woman through the appeal she has made by dress. She has gained modesty and beauty and with them self-respect. Of course, all men defer to her.

This development, however, has not been like the coming up of a flower in a garden. It often has been choked by crude or false ideas. It has run to the seeds of folly and immodesty. It has been crowded by the weeds of vanity and extravagance. No wonder so much has

been said and written against dress, for women themselves have furnished the texts.

Fashion plates of centuries ago might well have been taken in a chamber of horrors. Think of Queen Elizabeth in her monstrous ruff and iron-bound farthingale. Think of the tower-like coiffures of the day of Good Queen Anne that were reared of false hair and paste — of the inappropriate designs they displayed, such as a full-rigged ship, or a scene from mythology.

Think, too, of the uncleanness they concealed. It sometimes seems as if for one beautiful and appropriate style gained a thousand deformities had to be tried and rejected.

Why has this progress in dress been so slow and difficult? Principally because women have hesitated to think and act for themselves. It is the case of the Chinese shoes. What it is said should be worn, has been worn. Woman's position, too, encouraged this habit of imitation. She was at first almost a slave. Her mind was a subject mind. It naturally followed.

Those who dealt in feminine apparel were quick to take advantage of this feeling. From making what they were ordered to make, they came to make what they chose and to order

it to be worn. Hence the tyranny of Fashion. This Fashion, as its very name signifies, was at first nothing more nor less than the proper way of making or fashioning apparel, or the art of Dress. It came, through the deference paid by women to those who plied this art, to be a sort of a god. What Fashion said was what had to be done or worn, though the heavens fell or the earth gaped with dismay. Woman absolutely refused to think for herself, and so Fashion thought for her and thus ruled.

In consequence of this lack of thought, fashionable dress became and remained a mystery to the average woman. Why she put on this and took off that was something she did not understand further than it was the style to do so.

This state still continues, but with a difference. By looking back fifty or a hundred years we are able to see that the tyranny of Fashion is breaking from the weight of its own nonsense. To heed it very much is becoming just as impossible for women as it now is for them not to have property or minds of their own.

Since the modern woman is able to manage her husband, her husband's family, and their

own family, it seems likely that she may manage her own styles of dress. She listens just as eagerly as ever, but she picks here and there instead of swallowing it whole. The mystery is fading away before the light of refined taste and common sense.

By means of these two attributes each and every woman should be able to dress herself according to that highest standard — her ideal self.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST IMPRESSION

THE first impression is generally a lasting impression. It is the novelty that fixes the memory. Think for yourself how true this is of inanimate things. We remember the beautiful view as we first saw it; we remember the rare gem as its sparkle first caught our eye; the rose remains the rose that we first plucked.

If this is true — as it is — in nature, in architecture and in painting, it is even more true in regard to people.

While everybody has many phases of appearance and many sides of character, it is the phase and the side first presented that remain longest in the memory.

The mind naturally associates ideas; thus any grace or defect first noticed is apt to be associated with the woman showing it and becomes a very part of her individuality.

Everyone admits that this is true of the

expression of the face. It either invites or it repels. It either inspires love, or it causes distrust and dislike. The dress, too, has its expression, which is even more effective, for the expression of the face goes with it; combined they form the personality.

Here again comes in the importance of looking after every detail of dress. The eye has a wandering way of its own. Involuntarily it seizes upon some trifling peculiarity and the memory holds it. Who does not remember the woman with the wart on her nose by the wart? Who does not at once notice that a button is lacking from the otherwise perfect shoe? If the dainty gown is finished with a soiled or crumpled collar of lace, the impression that would have been pleasing is lost. This is a mild way of putting it, for sometimes a positive dislike is incurred.

The picture must be complete in order that the first impression be an agreeable one. It sometimes seems that the slighter the detail of dress the more prominent it is. Of course, the part it plays has something to do with this.

The hand is always intelligent and active. It is extended in greeting, it emphasizes conversation. The slightest rip in a glove,

therefore, is big enough to mar the finest costume. In fact, the finer the costume the more it will be marred.

Beyond its pleasing or unpleasing effect, the first impression is important, because it is taken by many as an index to character. Each little detail indicates some personal quality. Such expressions as "frowzy-head" and "down at the heel" have come to refer even more to the character than to the appearance itself. This is often unfair, for circumstances can be stronger than the best intentions, but the unfairness does not change the fact.

First impressions are very strong in the life of the home. Many a breakfast has been spoiled by an untidy kimono, while bread and butter is often glorified by the daintiness of the housewife who serves it. Love at first sight is a common phrase. When it is a true one you may be sure that the object of love has been appropriately and attractively dressed.

Indeed, the first impression of dress at home may be said to affect the house and the day. Slovenliness is contagious both in body and spirit, while neatness is a pervading tonic.

In an age so commercial as this the first impression in dress has also a business impor-

tance. More and more the woman of to-day is becoming a business woman of to-day. Often her appearance is her chief recommendation. The young woman who appears neat and trim gives an impression of being apt and clever. She who is slovenly in dress will be careless in business; at least, the average man thinks so.

Successful women, then, bear in themselves the marks and proofs of their success. The young business woman should always be neatly, trimly, and plainly gowned. Every detail from the coil of her hair to the tip of her shoe should be appropriately perfect. There should be no fluffiness, no gay colours, no artful attempt to display the person. The business man who deserves any part of that name employs a clerk, and nothing else.

Charles Dickens, in his "American Notes," praised the fine, neat, and intelligent appearance of the American girl at work in the mills of Lowell. What would he say now could he see the typical office girl, on her way to her work, in the New York subway?

One of the troubles is that a little learning is a dangerous thing in fashion. So many wrong and absurd ideas are put forward by those pretending authority in style that it

is no wonder that young and foolish girls, anxious to please yet ignorant of how they should do so, are misled. Their spirit is right. They feel it is their duty to be well dressed, but with them "fashionably" passes for "well."

To be well dressed one must always be appropriately dressed. If a fashion aids one in being appropriately dressed, then that fashion should be followed, but it should not if it does not.

A man does not go down to business in evening dress.

After all, the business life is still experimental for women. When the time comes, if it must, that she is an essential factor in business life, there will be an evolution in taste in the business dress just as there has been, to an extent at least, in the dress for the home and society.

Woman is rather slow to adapt herself to new conditions. It was natural, though deplorable, that in seeking for what would look best in a business life she should choose only what might look best outside of a business life.

Let the business girl try to put herself in her employer's place and think what sort of an appearing young woman he would wish work-

ing for him. Then let her try to give this impression in dress.

Let there be no mistake, the correctly dressed business woman does exist. She may be found in every city, and wherever she is seen she gives that impression of efficiency that her success warrants.

She wears dark colours. Her tailored suit has plain but proper lines. Her hat is small and her veil inconspicuous. She wears manish gloves and sensible shoes, both in perfect condition. You never think twice about her coiffure, it is so simple and right for herself. There is nothing of the dowdy about her, for whatever she wears she wears with distinction. The first impression is one of self-respect, and she deserves it.

The first impression is a good criterion of style. It is foolish to persist in wearing anything that causes wonder or ridicule. Style should never offend the sense of fitness. While it is the duty of every woman to dress becomingly, and while doing so to follow the trend of fashion, she should avoid the freaks and fads of the passing day.

These are no more real pictures than are the caricatures of the papers or the comic valentines of the store windows. There is

an ideal of dress ever present, whatever the dictates of dressmakers may be.

The woman who would give the best impression of herself at her best should always seek to follow this ideal.

CHAPTER III

THINGS DESIRABLE

AND there are very many desirable things in smart dressing, some of which are slighted as unimportant. But in a general way it may be said that there are no slight matters pertaining to dress. Dress is the result of care and thought in every particular. It requires the finishing touch of an artist.

There is nothing much smaller or slighter than a pin, nor is there a more necessary article for correct dress. It is very desirable for a woman to have on hand all sizes and kinds of pins and to be able instinctively to put her hand on any kind or size of them. One is apt to dress carelessly when one is flurried in dressing. The pin may be taken as a general symbol of the many little but important articles that should always be present on the dressing table.

The pin is a faithful servant that does the best work out of sight. A pin seen is generally a pin

misplaced. It should never encourage neglect any more than a faithful servant does. A stitch in time will save nine, but nine pins will not save one necessary stitch. There is no more deplorable sight than a pinned-up woman. It is the use, and not the abuse, of the pin that is one of the things desirable.

A woman must first see well in order to look well. Even if she has a maid to see for her, the maid's eyes are not her eyes. A mirror, then, is a thing most desirable, and if it is a three-sided mirror, it is at least that many times the more desirable. Some women dress as if the front view were the only view. It follows, too, that there should be plenty of light, and the lights arranged so that they do not cause confusing shadows. It is well to know the worst.

Genius has been defined as infinite patience, and the saying is certainly true of genius in dress. Hence time is one of the things desirable. A hurried costume can never be a completed costume, and when the costume is hurried the wearer is worried.

It is always desirable to adapt the clothes to the woman and the woman to the clothes, for together they produce the effect. It is desirable to have clothes, but even more de-

sirable to look as though you had them. Borrowed ideas should be as impossible as borrowed clothes, and, of course, no one will defend the wearing of garments not one's own except through absolute necessity. Very often, though, a woman looks as if she were wearing borrowed clothes, when in reality she is wearing her own. But she owns them, while they do not own her. They represent borrowed ideas and not her own ideas.

The great study of woman is woman, and first and foremost every woman should study herself. When a woman comes to think of her clothes as a part of herself, then they will partake of her individuality, and charm with her charm.

Centuries ago, each class was restricted to its own costume by law. The merchant and his good wife wore what was suitable for their condition, and the law said that it was not suitable for them to wear what the lord and the lady were wearing. What the law did then, correct taste should do now.

It is always desirable to fit the scene. If a woman is preparing her own breakfast, she should be dressed as a housewife, and there can be no more dainty and charming figure than a housewife correctly dressed.

One is effectively dressed who is dressed just as she should be under the circumstances.

Comfort is a desirable thing in dress, but it should be stylish comfort. Reform dressing is very apt to be deformed dressing, and while the one who is dressed in accordance with it may be comfortable, those who have to see her are most uncomfortable.

Correct dressing blesses those who wear and those who see.

There are many ways in which this fashionable comfort may be secured. A skilful dressmaker is most desirable. She understands the art of correct fitting, and that saves a multitude of discomforts. Ready-made clothes are only a near-fit at best. They all should be refitted to suit the individual who buys them. When ready-made clothes have thus been refitted, it is a desirable thing to add some detail, such as different buttons, or new facing for revers, or a distinctive collar. These will remove the similarity which is such a detriment to ready-made clothes.

Ready-made clothes, in a slight sense, are raw material. The woman herself by her own taste should convert them into an individual costume.

Light weight fabrics, of course, induce com-

fort, but very often heavy clothing can be comfortably worn because the weight has been adjusted and distributed by a skilful dress-maker. There is such a thing, too, as a sense of comfort, which comes from the consciousness of correct dress. This may seem psychological, but it is very real.

The clergyman who praises a tranquil spirit in preference to the pomps and vanities of the world is often unconsciously giving his fair parishioners a hint for effective dress.

It is desirable not to overwork one's clothes. They look best for what they were made. Besides, the most inanimate of things, such as tools, for instance, or machinery, improve through rest. This is especially true of clothes, which seem to have a soul or a personality of their own.

Light materials, trailing skirts and elaborate coats are not appropriate for stormy weather. It is desirable to have a rainy day outfit and the woman who wears it rises superior to the storm. But it is an affectation to wear a distinctive costume when the purpose for which it is designed does not exist, like wearing a yachting costume in summer, for instance, and not going near the water. One's pride may be satisfied by wearing automobile clothes when one must either

walk or ride in the street car, but one's common sense will suffer.

It is desirable to have a family chest filled with the good things of other days. An aristocratic air will often come from a scarf of antique design, or a shawl which is no longer on the market. Think of the fringed and embroidered crêpe scarfs and the Paisley and camel's-hair shawls. And then the antique jewellery which is so much more valuable now than in the day when it was bought. An old-time pendant may be the one touch that makes a commonplace costume a notable one. Old lace, too, gives distinction, taking the wearer back to the stately days of long ago. Again this may seem psychological, but, like the lace, it is very real.

All this talk of various clothes, modern and ancient, implies much money. But if good taste is a family characteristic, the amount is not so great as it would seem. Money is indeed a desirable thing in dress, but many a woman has been crushed under the weight of it. The money sense is seldom the artistic sense.

Very often the shop girl is better dressed than the wealthy woman upon whom she waits. She knows how to wear her clothes and the other does not. It is this innate sense of the



*“Trailing skirts and elaborate coats are not appropriate
for stormy weather”*

proper wearing of clothes that is one of the most desirable things in dress.

How does it come? How then, do self-respect and composure and dignity come?

They are outer signs of inner graces.

CHAPTER IV

THINGS TO BE AVOIDED

A TRUE woman is always womanly. She is proud of her sex and of the beauty and charm that belong to it. Her dress should always be an additional part of her beauty and charm and should in no way change them.

How often, though, is the fashionable ideal different from the womanly ideal! Of course, it is not necessary to talk about the big waist of the Venus de Milo. She was essentially an out-of-door woman. It is natural for the modern woman to have a small waist, and therefore it is all the more unnatural for her to pinch it into a wasp-like one. It is a safe rule always to avoid pinching in dress everywhere and at all times.

The ideal contour of the woman of the day should be kept by her dress. There are no more beautiful lines to a woman's figure than those which join the bust to the waist and the waist

to the hips. If these are harmoniously proportioned the form is a beautiful form, whether it be big or little. The woman of taste is continually thinking of those things to wear that will give her this harmonious contour. She is not adopting freakish devices of fashion that will really make her less beautiful. There are no patent medicines for true style.

This is not preaching the doctrine of common sense, but of becoming dress, stylish dress, effective dress. Of course, one of the chief aims of a woman's dress is charm. A shapeless waist and a back as if hewn out of wood are also things devoutly to be avoided.

Whenever fashions are treated as hard and fast rules the form is apt to be distorted. There is always need of the personal quality.

Women cannot be dressed by Fashion as if Fashion were in charge of an institution and they were the inmates. Fashion is a good friend, not a hard taskmistress. She should suggest, but not compel.

What are the visible results of a slavish following of Fashion, or of what some one says is Fashion?

Women cripple themselves with high heels that are entirely too high. No one objects to

a high heel. It is the too high heel that is the abomination.

A corset is a good thing. Indeed it is a necessary thing. Oftentimes, however, women put themselves into a vise. This word might be spelled the other way. As a result, the beautiful curves of the figure are flattened or bulged or sent off in some unnatural direction. Each woman should wear a corset suited to her own particular figure and not a long one, or a short one, or a tight one, or a loose one, simply because some one who knows nothing about her requirements or needs says so.

The collar is an important detail in effective dressing. Sometimes it is the one touch that gives life and light to a sombre gown. But the woman with the long, swan-like neck should not wear the collar of the woman who hasn't any throat to speak of and this rule is just as strong exactly the other way. It certainly is neither beautiful nor natural for a woman to carry her head so that she seems to be reaching to bite something.

Some collars are so stiffly and heavily boned and so very high that a woman has to turn her body in order to turn her head. The skin of the throat is so delicate in women that often an indelible mark is made through wearing

improper collars. Perhaps this ought to be a good thing for the elderly woman who desires to look young, because it will prevent her from wearing the telltale low cut neck which, very properly, is fashionable for those who can wear it, but frightful for those who cannot.

Speaking again of the Venus de Milo, nothing is more beautiful than the shape and curves of her head and hair. This effect in the modern woman would be just as beautiful if produced by artificial hair. It is not what is worn, but the way it is worn, that counts. Artificial hair is a thing to be avoided when it distorts the head, and there are Hottentot women in Africa whose coiffure is less preposterous than that worn by those who ape but do not appreciate the coiffure fashions of the day.

Suggestive fashions should be avoided. Oftentimes it is the wearer and not the fashion that makes the suggestiveness. There is generally a good reason back of every fashion, but unfortunately it doesn't always go with it. Instances are as disagreeable to mention as they are to see. But still, as horrible examples, these few may be mentioned out of many:

There is the skirt moulded to the figure, and therefore failing to perform one of the prime purposes of the skirt.

There is the lining which has the effect of flesh and is much more suggestive than the real flesh would be, because it is often worn out of doors and under circumstances where the wearer would not dare to go so thinly clad. What purpose does it serve then except suggestiveness?

Some women are very like ostriches. They think that what they cannot see themselves, no one else can see. This may be the reason why they dare have their waists cut even lower in the back than the front.

A word here for the neglected placket. Why, oh why, will women strut along complacently with their underwear exposed?

These are but a few horrible examples. Every woman can think of many more, and they all should be avoided. This is in no sense a sermon. Every woman can preach that for herself.

The point is, that immodesty in dress is unbecoming. A woman who knows she is immodestly dressed is under a strain. She has a difficult part to carry off. There is a boldness that comes from daring to violate conventions which leaves its trace not only on the face but the character itself.

Two minor evils which may lead to this

greater one—immodesty in dress—are overdressing and conspicuousness in dress. In immodesty in dress women put too little on; in these two instances they put too much on. Squaws do, too, by the way. It is a sign of barbaric taste.

Think of the little frail woman whom every one knows and laughs at. She is like a grab bag turned inside out or an animated Christmas tree. She doesn't wear things — she displays them.

A well-dressed woman should make herself a pleasant detail, but not the principal detail of the scene. When she puts herself forward she puts charm backward. A woman is to be sought, not to seek. It is the reserve power of knowing that she is sought that makes woman so captivating. A queen never has to advance from her throne in order to have her hand kissed.

Conspicuous dressing is a bid for favour which should be given without the bid. What then is conspicuous dressing? It is something that is inharmonious and out of place, perhaps nothing more than a glaring colour or the poise of a hat. It calls attention instead of attracting attention. A well-dressed woman does not require an advance-agent for advertisement.

Fashionable dress should be feminine dress.

When a hen crows, the wonder is not that she crows so poorly, but that she crows at all.

As a general rule, anything a man wears a woman should disdain to wear. Of course, there are exceptions, for men must know a few things, and they do know the things that are practical for business wear. If a woman must go to business, she will probably do well to wear mannish gloves, shoes, neckwear, and a tailored suit made only as a man's tailor and not as a dressmaker can make it. But at home let the hen not try to crow at all.

True style implies quality. It is better to have a very small painting than a very large chromo. It is better to have a well-made, correct-in-style costume than a dozen sham costumes. It is hard to carry off an imposition. But is there ever any doubt about the style of the correctly gowned woman?

Cost has really very little to do with it. The woman with taste may buy an attractive costume with a little money, and a woman without taste very often fails to buy an attractive costume with a great deal of money. When this woman without taste has only a little money, she satisfies herself, but no one else, with a cheap and gaudy imitation and it is a little money absolutely thrown away. What-

ever the flashy woman has looks better to herself than it does to any one else. She should therefore avoid trying to deceive others with cheap imitations when in her heart she knows she hasn't deceived herself.

These are a very few of the very many things that women should try to avoid in dress, the more so because they are all avoidable.

There are so many more things that can't be avoided, but must be endured as the penalty of correct dress, like the weight and drag of costumes, for instance, that these things that cannot beautify, but always mar, should be shunned.

CHAPTER V

THE MORAL EFFECT OF DRESS

EVERY one admits at once the influence of environment on character — well, dress is one's closest and most intimate environment, isn't it?

Now, don't you remember yourself — let us hope a long time ago — when you had a feeling that the back street and the shady side of it were 'the places for you? And wasn't it because your tailored suit was a last season's suit, or your hat was a back number? Of course it was.

If you had been dressed up to the moment in style it would have been the avenue, and the popular side of it, for you. There is discouragement in old duds just as there is confidence in a new and modish costume. The new gown makes you instinctively put your best foot forward, and the dainty shoe upon it is not run down at the heel.

What else do the right clothes when cor-

rectly worn do? They cause a woman to have self respect, and this is the first step toward getting the respect of others. At least the effects of untidiness are avoided and it is not necessary to moralize on them.

It is practice not preaching that we are considering. Oh, but, it may be said, the fashionably dressed woman is nothing but a doll or a butterfly! Even if this be true, the doll is a source of harmless pleasure, while the butterfly is a symbol of the soul.

If the woman be frivolous, where does the fault lie — in the woman or in her dress? Might she not be less innocently idle were it not that she is spending her time making herself attractive?

Good style in dress is not something to be acquired once for all. It comes gradually and requires constant attention or lo! before you know it, it is gone — that is to say, it is educational.

Of course, selfishness is a peculiar danger of devotion to dress. Oftentimes the more a woman looks well the more she wants to look at herself. Thus, she loses her interest in others, which is such a large part of a true woman's life. She not only becomes absorbed in herself but also in her clothes. To go to

the dressmaker's for endless fittings and to pose before a long mirror at the milliner's are the two things she likes best to do. Then comes the last stage. She talks of dress, the whole dress, and nothing but dress, until the only living person not bored is herself.

What is the mental state of a person too self-satisfied to realize that she is a bore? She is narrow and flighty and selfish.

Here dress has done its worst work. How is it when it has done its best work?

The woman of whom we oftenest think and longingly dream is the home woman. She is a queen and the home is her realm. She makes herself attractive and then she makes her surroundings attractive, going naturally from her own dress to these, her larger dress. It is a casket within a casket, and she is the jewel.

On the other hand, what kind of a home has the slattern? No kind at all. The poor creature — she only boards with herself.

There is nothing better in life than the habit of having habits — that is, good habits, of course. From one good habit may come many good habits like pretty little chickens, one after another, from the same nest.

Thus, from personal order comes general

order. The woman with the beautiful clothes and the more beautiful house comes to have a most beautiful nature. An expert palmist should be able to read a lady's character from seeing her gloved hand.

Attractive women in a refined and elevating society have attributes in common which hold them together like links in a chain. In this chain cleanliness is next to godliness, and then comes good style in dress.

Why, even an age may be judged by the dress of its women. The glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome were reflected in the grace and dignity of woman's apparel.

One can read the rigid ideas of the Commonwealth in the prim Quaker-like garb of the Puritan maiden, and the corruption of the Restoration in the gay costumes of the court of Charles the Second. It is woman that sets the stride; sometimes it is the walk, by which a goddess is revealed; sometimes it is the pace that kills.

What story does the dress of the day tell of our age? There are lights and shades, but the light keeps growing brighter and the shades are left behind. The Grecian bend would be impossible to-day.

Now and again the manufacturers have tried to make the modern woman step into the hoop skirt, but every time she daintily steps around it. A woman will still make a guy of herself as in the sheath skirt, the hobble skirt, and the lamp shade hat, but she will not make a monstrosity of herself. She will still be unmoral in dress, but she will not be immoral in dress.

There are absurdities enough, heaven knows, whereby true modesty is violated, such as the skin-tight skirt and the décolleté, sleeveless bodice, but the semblance of covering worn during the Directoire period in France will never be revived for American women.

The costumes of to-day may be suggestive, but they are not frankly sensual.

But the evening costume is really not the characteristic costume. In general, the everyday clothes of our women speak well for the moral sense of those wearing them.

Women are more considerate now of their health in their dress. The prints of fifty years ago showed the American woman tripping through a snowstorm in low-cut slippers, for instance. Our great-grandmothers were hothouse plants in a way, because they would not dress for the open air.

Women know more, too, now of hygiene, and once in a while, at least, they heed what they know in their dress. It is a slow process, but still there is progress toward a charming dress that at the same time is a sensible dress.

The very frivolity often condemned in dress has a good effect upon the majority of women, who might otherwise adopt it if it were not that the living picture scared and shamed them.

One moral tendency of modern dress is that women no longer slavishly accept every style. They do, sometimes, think for themselves in dress. Then comes a sense of responsibility, since they no longer have the excuse of "Oh! it is the fashion." They do not choose to do daring things when they no longer feel themselves forced to do them. Gradually, very gradually, individuality is teaching each woman the better way, which is the becoming way.

Have you thought of the moral influence exerted collectively by very many well dressed and refined women? That is to say, by the best society as it should be? From such an atmosphere of fitness there must come a sense of duty to each one to do his or her best, which the French call *noblesse oblige*.

It is through seeking higher things that mankind secures higher things. Of course, at the most, dress is only one factor in this human progress. But it is a real one, because it is so very real and dear to every true woman. Oftentimes our weaknesses may be stepping-stones toward perfection.

CHAPTER VI

INHUMANITY IN DRESS

THE conventional angel as shown in painting and sculpture is always simply clad. Perhaps the lesson of this simplicity in dress is that were the angels concerned about an elaborate toilette they would no longer be angelic.

The least trying part of a new dress is the trying on of it. That is bad enough, but the nerves and the temper are at the same time tried to the straining point. Why is this so?

It is very often because the woman is doubtful of herself, her taste, her dressmaker, and the fashion itself. When women come to know just what they want and how they are to get it, there will be little of this fretfulness in dress.

As it is, the average husband, when he hears that a new hat or a new dress is coming home, is very apt to think that he will go around to the club for a little while.

But there are members of the household who cannot go around to the club, even if the husband is so fortunate as to manage to escape. There are the children and there are the servants in general, and the dressing maid in particular. They have to stand the excitement.

The children are packed off to bed or else they have to sit in corners and keep still, while the debate in the kitchen grows hot as to whether it isn't awfully extravagant and whether she will like it, anyway.

Meanwhile, the chief victim of the sacrifice, the dressing maid, is pulling and twisting, and taking off and putting on again, and standing this way and that way, and then doing it all over again. At length comes the fatal ending, a good, hard cry.

But it isn't the poor, tired little maid who has this good, hard cry, for she has none of the luxuries of life. They and it belong to her mistress. But she is having a cry of her own in her attic room — the bitter tears that come from hurt feelings and twisted nerves and hopelessness of any of the pleasant things of life.

Has it been worth while — all the tumult in the household for a hat or a dress which,



“The children are packed off to bed”

if the purchaser had stopped for a moment of sober thought, she never would have bought.

But this tragic crisis is by no means the whole fretful story. There have been endless discussions, before the article was ever chosen as a last desperate resort, that spoiled the pleasant gathering at meals and made the evening lamp too heated for endurance. Indeed, the trying-on season is a trying season.

If the home is so disastrously affected by the dress perplexities and woes of one woman, what is the effect of the combined dress perplexities and woes of womankind upon manufacture and trade?

In the hurry to satisfy woman's scramble for the newest and latest thing, the seasons have fairly been pushed out of place. Spring styles are offered when the snow is flying at Christmas-tide, while all the changes in winter costumes are settled in mid-summer.

This would be well enough if these out-of-season styles stayed long enough to make it worth while, but there is hardly time for the catching of breath before factories and workshops are booming and teeming over the inevitable and never-present novelty which is always coming but never stays long enough to be seen.

It is reasonable to suppose, without going into the statistics of labour, that if the masters are hurried and worried, the toilers are far worse off. Only too often the silly and useless extravagances of dress represent long hours, scant pay, crowded work shops, the lack of everything sanitary, and hence suffering and sin.

If this is so of articles that have some worth of their own, how is it with the cheap imitations that simply resemble in a slight degree the genuine article and that are sold to gratify the vanity of those who should not expect or try to have such things? Cheap wares imply cheap labour, and God only knows what cheap labour implies.

It is the sins that have been committed in the name of novelty that make the very sound of this word so odious.

What possible reason was there for making a wrap out of the skins of little lambs, still unborn, except that such a wrap would be a most unusual one? So, too, it may be noted, would be a wrap made of the skins of savages. It is not impossible to imagine some heartless beauty saying: "What of it? What else were they made for?"

But that is not the voice of woman, true

woman, who is man's comforter, who loves little children and cares for every living thing, be it great or small.

This true woman is fond of birds. What does she think, then, of the slaughter of the countless thousands of these little friends that are so glad to serve and cheer?

What does she think of depriving the heron of its chief glory and the cruel and bloody way in which this is done? And then there is the poor ostrich, which, however ungainly, has feelings of its own.

What does my lady of the sealskin wrap say of the slaughter of the female seals, slaughtered often when carrying their young?

What do the mothers think of all these cruelties toward dumb creatures of their own sex, that are also mothers? Does any one at this particular point feel called upon to write a poem on maternity?

The answer is that women do not think. In the joys of possession, they refuse to consider how the coveted article was got. They have it and some one else hasn't, and that is the one thing needful in heartlessly fashionable dress.

This hurry, worry and rush of manufacture and trade is fittingly reflected in shopping.

In "shopping" — in quotation marks, of

course — it is this always quoted shopping that has a peculiar sense of its own, and that is the only sense about it. It is the rush to buy new things which, of course, is meant. This rush has many of the characteristics of a mob. It is thoughtless. It is set upon one mad purpose and to achieve its purpose it is inconsiderate and often cruel.

Does this sound too extreme? How many women, on an opening day, spare the shop girl or even think of sparing her? They ask her to show many, many things which they haven't the slightest idea of buying. They expect her to answer all kinds of irrelevant questions. They force her to lift down without a care that she must put back, and all this idle while they keep her standing.

Why should employers provide stools for their girl clerks when their customers will prevent them from ever using them? These poor girls, too, will have to stand up in the cars on the way home, because it has suited many women to "shop" — again the quotation marks — just before the rush hours.

It is sad to think how truly Johnson's lines may be paraphrased into:

"Woman's inhumanity for woman,
Makes countless thousands mourn."

CHAPTER VII

EXTREMES IN DRESS

IT IS a safe rule in dress to avoid extremes. Folly flies while common sense sits down and considers. Often, if a woman will take time to think twice regarding some freakish article of dress, it will be withdrawn from the market before she can make up her mind about it.

The scrap heaps of fashion if joined together would make the mightiest mountain chain on earth. But Folly in her latest aeroplane could easily fly over it.

Too often new styles are merely a matter of business. They are the result of the avarice of trades people and not of the wishes of customers. Ingenuity is used in making some new and strange thing. Then it is stamped as the latest mode, though nobody on earth knows who does the stamping.

Yet, the average woman feels it her duty not only to hurry up and buy it, but pay the highest

possible price for it. This highest price is, of course, the first price, for novelty alone gives value.

Does any woman doubt it?

Let her price the freakish costume she bought at first sight three months afterward. If it can be found tucked away out of sight, it will be marked down a third or a half. This very detestable phrase "marked down" shows in itself the worthlessness of much of the stuff that is made just to sell.

Do we ever hear of "marked down" sales of ermine, for instance?

Competition helps avarice in this mad race for novelty. The moment the other shops have the new thing which one shop has brought out, it is no longer the new thing for the one shop. Thus, no sooner is a novelty chased in than it is chased out again.

Another result of this craze for something that is new and is good only while it is new is the inferiority of the materials used. This is due to the hurry in which things are made and the great quantity of them that is forced on the market. Quality does not count when one simply looks and grabs.

What a contrast exists between the wardrobe of the average young woman of to-day and that

which her mother had forty or fifty years ago.

Indeed, it is foolish to speak of the present-day wardrobe because in most cases it doesn't exist. Yet, dignifying the quick transition from the shop to the rag bag by such a name as wardrobe, what are the treasures we find in it?

Do we find any real lace, any bolts of silk, or pieces of silk backed velvets, any India or Paisley or Cashmere shawls? Do we find any genuine jewellery?

If only standard goods were sold and worn, half of the department stores would have to close their doors.

Imitation is also accountable for many of the extremes in dress. Women, like birds of a feather, flock together and are only too apt to peck at and drive out the uncommon bird. And yet, sometimes it happens that they all come to ape and copy this same uncommon bird.

It is the approval of Style that makes all the difference.

Not long since, the poke bonnet, which had been ridiculed on the stage for a hundred years, came again into vogue.

The country girl has always been a stock subject for ridicule on the stage.

Let us imagine her appearing a few years ago

dressed according to the extremes of fashion of to-day. She wears a hat, an inverted flower-pot, that almost covers her eyes and rests on her shoulders at the back. She wears a skirt scant and tight and tied in so that graceful walking is out of the question, and any walking at all is a difficult matter. How loud and long and deep would have been the laughter.

Suppose again, she had strolled up Fifth Avenue in such an attire, on a pleasant afternoon not more than two years ago, would she not have been unanimously voted a guy?

Surely, there must be something else besides custom that makes style desirable. Is it not possible that it may be good taste?

Years ago, especially in foreign countries, many absurd fashions came into vogue through imitation of royalty. Because a royal personage had a noticable defect, it was quite the thing for every fashionable person so to dress as to seem to have it also. It was the old story of the fox without a tail.

This same story often has a force even at the present day here.

While all men are equal in this country, all women will agree that all women are not. Some particular woman sets a pace in the lime-



*“The papers illustrate the new and what they term
‘fetching’ style”*

light, and all her sisters hurry out of the shadow to follow her.

Let a fashionable society leader appear in an exclusive New York restaurant for instance, in a frock which has some new and eccentric feature to it, such as balloon sleeves, when small, tight sleeves are being worn.

Every other woman present gasps and whispers to her neighbor, "What a fright she looks. I wouldn't wear such sleeves, would you?"

It isn't necessary to say what the answer is.

But on the next night, you may be sure big sleeves will be worn by these same gasping women. Then the papers illustrate the new and what they term "fetching" style, and every poor little shop girl in the land scrimps and starves the more until she has them.

Now, it is very possible that these big sleeves were a fetching style for the enterprising woman who wore them at the restaurant. She may have been tall and sylph-like and may have required just the breadth that they gave.

But how about the short woman, and the dumpy woman, and the inevitable fat woman, who always will try everything but the right thing? When each woman learns to dress for herself, imitation will be one of the arts that are well lost.

A lesson often may be taught by horrible examples.

Let us enumerate a few that speak for their own absurd selves. In the last half century women have worn and have been glad to wear the hoop skirt, the tilting bustle, the water-fall chignon, the pulled-back skirt, the shoe with the extreme French heel, the pancake hat and the hat with the tower-like crown, the high stiff ruff, the sheath skirt, and the hobble skirt. Suppose any one of them was now condemned to wear all of these styles except the latest ones. Would she not think it a cruel and unusual punishment?

A woman should always dress as if for a portrait of which she will not be ashamed for the rest of her life, and which her children will cherish and point to with pride.

Extremes of fashion can never give this lasting charm. Let each woman choose for herself the middle course. It is safest and surest.

CHAPTER VIII

ESSENTIALS TO SMART DRESSING

SOMETIMES the woman who is well dressed doesn't know it. But generally she does. That is to say, smart dressing is more a matter of care than of good luck.

Of course, there is the very fortunate woman who naturally looks well under all possible circumstances, even as the angels do. But to the average woman, smart dressing is a matter of thought and preparation.

Perhaps the essentials of smart dressing can be most quickly learned from actual examples. Every one knows women who are models of fit appearance. Now what are the qualities that make them so?

Immaculateness first and foremost. There can be no more grades to this in a woman than there can be in a lily. She is either spotless or spotted. Here, too, comes in a mental pleasure to which reference will often be made. The woman who is spotless in person and attire

feels so. And this gives her both confidence and dignity of manner.

Close to this care of the person is the carriage, which, of course, should be correct and easy, with a touch of stateliness, and even haughtiness if the stiffness can be taken from one and affability added to the other. The gusher is never a model of either correct dress or manners. How can she be when she is never still enough even to be posed. There is a certain repose that should be cultivated. One who doesn't do what the gusher continually does has gone far toward acquiring it.

The average woman is generally a little behind time or very tired. Thus, she either waddles and rushes or she lolls. Neither of these states is beneficial to her dress.

Her dress, too, unless she has acquired the art of dressing, is a hindrance. It is said that Italian women who carry great weights on their heads gain thereby a beautiful and graceful walk. But a water jar or a heavy bundle is a far different thing from the ponderous weight of each season's millinery creation. Think of the extreme and ferocious size of the hat pin, and yet it is utterly inadequate to hold the average big hat in place.

Then the fashionable coiffure is an infirm

foundation. When it sways a little, the great hat sways much more, and as a result the head is thrown out of place and the neck and shoulders distorted.

Many a little woman with a big hat becomes a skillful contortionist, but the accomplishment is not a charming one.

It is not the hat alone either that teaches this art. There are very tight sleeves that bind the arms to the body, and very tight skirts that prevent an easy and graceful use of the legs. There is the trailing skirt, too, that impedes and entangles. Then there are the many ways in which the hands are hampered, being called upon to do quite too many things, with gloves so tight that not one of them can be done properly.

Shoes have something to do with the hobble or shuffle that goes for a walk, and not lectures but sermons might be written on the mistakes, yes, the sins, of the feet. It is positively criminal the way some women outdo the Chinese in foot-torture and then wonder why they are not comfortable and graceful. This is indeed a basic fault.

Not far removed from this is the conventional garter which is generally too short and too tight, tending to throw the figure off its natural

centre by pulling the body forward and giving the stoop of old age to the shoulders. Many women buy shoulder braces quite unnecessarily, for if they would lengthen their garters there would be no need of the braces.

Then, of course, there are the corsets, the sleeves, the skirts and the coats. When these are eccentric fads, instead of sensible fashions, they impede free action and hold her as with a clog.

Atalanta herself would have a sorry time of it encased in a corset almost down to her knees, and what, oh! what, would she do in a hobble skirt a yard and a half wide or in a voluminous skirt suggesting crinolines? Then coats are often far too heavy to be worn gracefully. A woman about to select a coat is often so charmed by its chic cut, rich material, and elaborate trimmings that she fails to think how hard it will be to carry such a weight. It is often an instance of the pygmy trying to wear the giant's clothes.

Every woman should bear in mind that the carriage will help the figure, no matter how poor the figure may be. Of course, physical deficiencies do detract from smart dressing. They should be corrected as far as possible, and good carriage is the first step, and a long one, too, toward this improvement.

Very much has been written, and truly, too, of the physical benefits derived from walking. But the walking should be correct walking, and correct walking is graceful walking.

But walking is only one of the rational ways by which physical defects may be helped, if not remedied. Violent exercises should in all cases be avoided, but calisthenics are helpful. It is a great deal easier to persuade the body than to drive it. There is something, too, in having the physical ideal clearly in mind, which is to say, a woman must know what she wants to be before she can be it.

Habit is another essential. There can be no vacations in correct dress. As the witty man cannot afford to be stupid, so the well-dressed woman must always be well dressed. It is expected of her, and any lapse would be a shock not only to her friends but to herself. Things that are hard to do are those that we do seldom. Habit makes them easy and a pleasure, too. Of course, there is infinite detail about this habit — not even the slightest thing can stand neglect.

Vigilance is the price of good style as it is of liberty.

However, it is the spirit that counts above all. The carriage may be perfect, the form

ideal, the materials rich and fashioned with style, but if good taste is not there the result is no more than a lay figure.

Good taste is the best dressmaker, and thought is her ablest forewoman. What, then, is good taste and how is it to be acquired?

It is what the best people like the most. It is a sense of fitness that comes either naturally or by education. Some women have it as a flower has its own beautiful colour, but more gain it through observation of others and study of themselves.

There are women who, every one agrees, are well dressed, and the woman who is anxious to be refined in her dress taste should observe them closely. So, too, should she observe the modes, which, if they are not, at least should be, the result of good taste.

All this observation will do much, but self-study will do more. Again, habit comes in to help. When once good taste becomes a habit it becomes fixed and natural. Good taste is particularly the close friend of the woman of moderate means. A queen and a peasant woman might put on the same cheap costume, but the queen would look queenly and the peasant woman would look countrified.

It is not the cost of the material but the way in which it is worn that attracts. The woman of taste makes the most of everything, but the most of everything makes the ordinary woman still look ordinary.

Shall another word be said here about horrible examples? Every one can see and sight them. Take low russet shoes with the satin dancing gown, the tailored shirt waist with the picture hat, the plain one-piece dress with the dressy satin or velvet coat, the diamond pendant with the tailored suit, and the fluffy silk and chiffon frock worn with the mannish covert jacket and hat, suitable only for an aviation meet. Is it any wonder that angels weep as often as they do.

Shun the horrible example. Study the women of acknowledged good taste, for they choose the good styles and leave alone the bad ones. The woman who wishes to be well dressed and who strives to do much on a little soon learns that it is possible for little things to please as much as great ones.

The eye of man is not analytical. When it is pleased it rests content. Good taste will cover a multitude of deficiencies. It will do even more. It will give to deficiencies the attribute of charm.

CHAPTER IX

ECONOMY IN DRESS

FASHION may encourage extravagance, but it does not compel it. It is always as possible to be temperate in buying as it is to be temperate in eating or drinking. One can look the other way, you know.

There is nothing more foolish than to get in the habit of buying. At many a bargain sale it is the shrewd dealer who gets the bargain and the silly customer who is sold.

Speaking of bargain sales, they show women more as they used to be than as they are coming to be — that is, as governed by a common impulse instead of each by her own mind. It is said that East Indian magicians hypnotize their subjects by having them gaze steadily at some bright object like a crystal. Women who frequent bargain sales are often hypnotized by a cheap and gaudy glitter.

Besides, jealousy is really not a good quality in

making purchases. Simply because one woman acts as if she couldn't live without a certain article is no reason why you couldn't live very nicely without it. How often does it happen that the much-wished-for article, when taken home, does not look as it seemed at the sale, but as it really is, and gets the back shelf in consequence.

To buy for the sake of buying is like gambling at cards. Too often all that one gets is the excitement and the booby prize.

The provident woman, on the other hand, when she goes to a bargain sale, knows what she is after and generally gets it at a considerable reduction. If she needs some new ribbon to make a bow or a rosette for her hat, why buy it one day at the regular counter and pay more for it than wait until, perhaps, the next day and get it at a much less price? Of course, in all such cases a bargain sale is a good thing.

When a new style is announced, the best course is to wait. First prices are always the highest prices. They try it on the silly person in order to see how far they can go with the prudent person.

Besides, a new style is an experimental style. The second thought as well as the second sight may discard it. Many an extravagant woman has a wardrobe full of fashionable

things which even she may not wear. They are not even good enough to give away, because she must, at the same time, give herself away.

The economical woman in dress is the provident woman in dress. She buys what she wants, but never what she doesn't want. Things that are simply made to sell should be avoided. They should be made to be worn. The cheapest things are seldom the best, while, on the other hand, the best things are often the cheapest.

Think of the imitations that are worked off on the unwary, especially the poor unwary. There are the imitation furs, the plush that passes for sealskin, and the cat that masquerades as a fox.

There is the imitation jewellery often selected in the hope of brightening an old dress or worn hat. A woman is much better off without it than with it. It soon reveals its own base qualities and betrays her trust.

There are imitation dress fabrics often more brilliant of hue than the standard goods, like *crêpe de chine* that is almost all cotton and velvet with a shoddy back. Such fabrics are a snare and a disappointment and never repay the bent back and patient fingers for the hard work of making them up. They spot and fade

and shrink and do all the evil things good clothes would be ashamed to do.

It is extravagant to cast aside things as no longer stylish when the new style is a mere matter of rearrangement. When it comes to the use of new and untried materials, Lady Fashion is conservative and cautious. She sticks to the old lines and seeks new effects. Think of the centuries that velvet, feathers, laces and furs have been worn, yet in every few years worn in a very different way.

What the French dressmaker can do by a twist and a turn, the woman of moderate means can also do with her old but not worn materials, when her hand has also the cunning.

It is economy to be able to do for one's self. Why not, indeed, when, if a woman will use her eyes and brain, the shop windows and the magazines will give her practical instruction. The ability comes with the doing. Gradually a woman may learn what is best for herself and how to make that best.

There is a friendliness, too, to these old materials. They partake of the home; they partake even of the personality. They give back attractiveness in gratitude for being worn so much. Very often old clothes like old friends wear the best.

Care will do much to give these old clothes the smartness but not the stiffness of the shop. A good deal of awkwardness, by the way, comes from the stiffness of clothes that have not been broken in and trained.

The economical woman knows how to press and freshen. She knows the art of making a little new thing do much. Her wardrobe is a sanitarium for clothes. When they come out, it is as if they had been made over again.

But the economical woman has stock things that are new. She has a tailor-made suit, inconspicuous in colour and not extreme in its style. The fabric of it is first class and it is made just as it should be, with care in the smallest detail. Such a suit becomes a standby for several seasons. This enables her to buy new and fetching accessories to wear with it that both change and adapt the suit to many and varied occasions.

With a severely tailored silk waist that harmonizes with the colouring of the suit she is appropriately dressed for shopping and general everyday wear. With a costume blouse of silk and chiffon, she turns her tailored suit into a costume quite *au fait* for afternoon teas.

A new belt will give this suit a new look.

A collar and cuff set of antique lace will give the air of elegance to it. And there are no end of effects that can be obtained by such little trifles as neck bows and jabots and tulle rosettes.

Indeed, the resourceful woman with a single suit is continually playing the game of now you see it and now you don't.

The economical woman should have a feather — such a long, beautiful feather, too, as the fashionable and extravagant woman is sure to have, but the economical woman takes care of hers and wears it for a lifetime instead of a season. It is nearly impossible to wear out a good feather; while, on the other hand, you can always wear it out—don't you see?

The economical woman should never buy cheap shoes. They ruin an otherwise fetching costume by their purely commercial lines. They soon wear out, and before they do you wish they would. The foot, like the hand, requires the finest covering.

The term "lady" is becoming so obsolete that often one asks: "What is a lady?" One thing is certain, a lady always wears the finest gloves and the best of shoes. Perhaps those who do not know what she is may recognize her by them.

The economical woman will take care always

to wear becoming clothes. The becoming lines will hide much that is out of date.

The time is coming when such an admiring remark as, "Why, that dress must have cost a small fortune," will never be heard. The gown of the perfectly dressed woman is never costly — it is beyond cost. Why is this so? Because there is no shop, even in Paris, where good taste can be bought.

This should be an inspiration to the woman of small means. She has it within herself to present always an attractive appearance.

The mere material should be a slave rather than a master. It is the impression of the whole that does it — it is the impression in dress that counts.

CHAPTER X

COLOURS

LUCKILY, it was a man—Joseph, with his coat of many colours—who set the bad fashion of a lot of colours in dress.

The woman of refinement, when devising her dress, never uses a big brush or a well-filled palette. She just touches with colour, even as Dame Nature does, who is mistress of the art of colour.

“But there is the rainbow,” one may object. Well, the especial charm of the rainbow is that it is a good way off and doesn’t stay long. Who would like to live with one?

Now, the love of indiscriminate colour dates back to primeval days. The tattooed savage, the be-blanketed squaw, the gypsy, picturesque only at a distance, all believe that to be conspicuous is to be beautiful. The truth is that beauty is conspicuous because it is beautiful.

The newer the wealth, the sharper this craving for a confusion of colours. Some of our new-rich women seem to have as their motto, "Never put off until to-morrow what you can put on to-day." They certainly live up to it.

In colour, as in every other accessory of dress, the middle course is the safest course. Good taste is neither an alarmist nor an extremist.

Colour in dress depends much upon age and existing conditions, such as environment and climate. Colour combinations, excusable in the young, are unpardonable in the old; and Nature herself teaches this lesson. The birds when they mate are of gay plumage, but the old bird is always the dark and sober bird.

So, too, the young matron may wear what the widow should never wear — though only the Lord knows what some widows will wear, notwithstanding.

Environment should influence the use of colours. The average American woman cannot dress in the vivid colours of the Spanish belle. If she did, she would look as if on her way to bal masque. She has not the romantic setting of the senorita. The American woman's

atmosphere is too sharp and clear; she is self-conscious instead of unconscious.

Nor can she dress like the French woman, for she has not her natural audacity. The Parisienne's costume is as much a part of her personality as her roguish glance, her expressive gestures, shrugs, and postures, as even the frou-frou of her gown. Whatever she wears is a part of her fascination; and this natural fascination is so compelling that one does not stop to analyze it. It takes centuries of inbreeding to wear red and green and yellow, and yet seem perfectly dressed. While the shadow of the Puritan lowers over the American woman who dares.

Even the climate itself is against any such exuberance of colour. Its tendency is to exaggerate, to accentuate. There is no rose so gorgeous as the American rose. One should therefore be chary of solid colours. Like solid food, they are apt to be a little too hearty.

The nature of colours should also be carefully considered. Some are shrewish and spiteful, while others are kind and greatly to be trusted. The choice of a wrong colour may ruin a costume. The choice of the right colour may make it a success.

Every woman should have her favourite colour; but there should be good reasons of her own for its being her favourite colour. It should be the colour that is most becoming to her; that shows the best of her and shades the worst of her. It is marvellous what can be done by a skilful blending of the artificial hues of dress with the natural hues of the person. Harsh lines and surfaces are obliterated; and there comes a soft loveliness like the lingering of the afterglow in the twilight. Such effects are seldom the result of elaboration. The most effective colour is often the simplest colour.

In choosing correct colours for individual types, one should first have a definite idea of what effect one wishes the ensemble to produce. Is it harmony, or is it contrast?

For instance, a brunette with brilliant colouring of her own may wear crimson, rich blues and warm greens if she wishes the general effect to be one of brilliancy. If, on the other hand, she wishes to emphasize her own colouring by the contrast of her dress, then she will wear such dull, neutral colours as sage green, blue, gray, and tan, which are usually dedicated to the use of blondes.

This principle is illustrated in the pictures

of Corot and many other painters of the Barbion school where a crimson roof, the scarlet blouse of a fisherman, the red cap of a peasant or some other detail is introduced to bring out the characteristically restful quality of the greens.

In considering the brunette with brilliant colouring, the brunette with the sallow shades must not be overlooked. She cannot wear what she will. Her muddy complexion requires skilful treatment. She must know the curative power of colours before deciding. Perhaps the best thing for her to do is to match the eyes and the hair.

If the hair is "coal black," choose black for your colour, with old or yellowish laces near the face. Avoid white near the face, for it will emphasize the yellow tones of the skin, and make you look more sallow than you really are. Dull gold jewellery you will find becoming, but flee from blue as you would from the wrath to come. Blue, favourite among colours as it is, cannot always be depended upon. For the sallow brunette, it is impossible; since it is the complement of yellow and must bring out all the yellow tints lurking in the skin.

Of all types of women, the blonde with the

brilliant hues has the easiest, happiest time in choosing becoming colours. The blue of her eyes, the reddish yellow of her hair and the pink of her cheeks suggest the use of violets in which blues and reds are intermingled proportionately to her eyes and complexion. A warm violet gray is apt to be charming on such a woman; but she must remember that if her colouring is warm she should not choose an absolutely cold colour for her dress, for the contrast will be crude. Pink to match her cheeks will be becoming, as will be a tint of blue to blend with her eyes. Both black and white may be worn effectively by this brilliant blonde.

The woman with light hair and fair skin inclined to pallor may wear soft pink, but not a pink so deep as to overpower the delicacy of her colouring. The rosy reflection will serve the purpose of making her cheeks look pinker than they really are. Oftentimes the pale girl hears the greeting, "How well you are looking." She smiles to herself, for she knows that the remark is due solely to a well-devised touch of colour. Brown, dark red, and light blue will also be becoming colours for her.

The girl with auburn hair will look well in

deep plum, a brown that tones with her hair, dark blue, dark green, or both light and dark gray.

The woman whose hair is gray should wear dark colours; especially if there is a yellowish tinge to the gray that is reflected in her complexion. She will look much younger if she gets a dark note under her chin. Gray is also her colour, but not a gray lighter than her hair. She may also wear mauve, deep shades of violet, and clear shades of black and white in closely mingled patterns.

The use and abuse of colour in dress is a study which never ceases. One can never be finished with it. A woman should not follow general rules without first studying her individual colouring, precisely as an artist would study it in order to determine on the kind of background he should use for her portrait. Such terms as red and blue, used independently, mean nothing at all.

A red with purplish shadows may have the effect of a cold colour; while a blue of the robin's-egg variety, hovering between blue and green, may be quite warm in tone.

I have seen a magnificent blonde, with yellowish brown hair and eyes a bit browner, and a creamy complexion heightened by the

vivid red of cheeks and lips, look like a Venetian beauty of the sixteenth century in a costume of bronze velvet, gold in the lights and tawny in the shadows, with feathers of the same colour in her hat and a heavy gold chain, with topaz ornaments, about her neck. She was an artist's wife, and knew the particular harmony that could be made with her colouring, which in the conventional blue or green dedicated to blondes would have lost entirely its glowing quality and have looked a little heavy. So much for the touch of an artist's hand.

A minor detail that should be studied in order to wear becoming colours is artificial light. The belles of long ago had an easier time of it; for the glow of wax candles resembles the daylight in that it does not change or distort. Indeed, it has something of the unreal charm of moonlight. With gas came disheartening discoveries of how delicate and changeable is the most reliable colour under it; while electricity is apt to blight with its deep, sharp shadows.

Colours, then, are a very important part of a liberal education in dress. To wear one colour well, one must be artistic; to wear more than one well, one must be an artist. Indeed,

unless the relationship and dependency of colours each upon the other, and still more the repugnancy which one colour may have for another, are thoroughly understood, a safe rule for the use of various distinctive colours in a costume is the old, familiar one, "Don't."

CHAPTER XI

DRESS ACCESSORIES

OF COURSE, you know the woman who dresses like every other woman? You remember her in sort of a collective sense, and it is not a very pleasing sense either. She is a duplicate that makes no distinct impression on your mind. She lacks personality. She simply goes along.

Perhaps it is her manner which is devoid of character. Perhaps it is her dress which is without individual charm. But whatever the reason of the defect, there must be a remedy for it.

Since these are dress talks, let us consider the responsibility of dress in achieving distinctiveness, always remembering that when dress reaches its perfection a perfect manner attends it.

If all women dressed alike, no matter how rich the fabric or how chic and clever the cut, their dress would be accepted without being noticed. A uniform has its greatest distinc-

tion either when it has never been seen except on one person alone, and thus the sense of uniformity is entirely eliminated, or when it is worn by a number of persons acting together, because then it gives the impression of an individual type.

Charm in dress is hard to define, yet all are swift to recognize it. There is always an unexpected quality in it. It piques and holds the attention through a variation which is an improvement of the usual.

And this unexpected quality is most often the expression of individual taste, introduced into the costume by different smart little accessories. These give the touch of life to dress which saves it from monotony.

Of course, the wearing has much to do with it. In identically the same dress a queen would look queenly, while a milkmaid would still be the milkmaid. But between these extremes of class there is a vast multitude of women who slavishly follow each season the prevailing fashion, not only in dress but in manner and carriage, even as the soldiers of an army obey an order from headquarters. To each one of these women who wishes always to look her best the accessory is often a saving grace.

It is right here that self-knowledge and taste have the better of wealth. The only eye which cost first attracts is the eye of the trader. The ordinary observer says, "She is prettily dressed," before saying, "she is richly dressed." The one expression is a part of human nature; the other is a part of human ceremony. Were it otherwise, our millionairesses would be vying with one another in costumes made of hundred and thousand-dollar bills.

There is an incalculable fortune awaiting the genius who is able to sell personal charm.

Style and fashion are the features of dress, but accessories are its expression. The dress which lacks accessories — touches of individual taste — is like the dress on a form in the shop. It is dumb. The dress which is vibrant with impressions is the dress which reveals the life of the wearer. It is distinctive, because its accessories make it so. They sound the personal note.

A wax flower may be a perfect copy of a flower in natural bloom, but it still is as dead as wax. Will any woman say that she loves it?

A famous character in fiction became known as "The Lady of the Camelias," Why? She had rare jewels and laces and the costliest

of gowns. And yet the flower which she intuitively wore was so associated with her as to be her type. It was because that flower became her most and gave her the most personal distinction. It was that and that alone which was remembered of her even as she herself was remembered.

An accessory may be a very humble detail of dress and yet give tone to the whole costume. In selecting accessories for different costumes, it is important that the right accessory be used with the right costume.

In an attractive face, you know, the features and the expression match. Together they make what charms.

Study the costume first in deciding on the right accessories for it, even as you would study a picture, but a picture not quite complete. What are the touches that the picture needs to bring out its true meaning and its best points? Such are the accessories that a particular costume requires.

Here are some mental pictures to consider which may illustrate this point: There is the typical American Summer Girl in her shirt-waist suit. She is the tailor-made type. Imagine her first in her smart linen skirt and her plain shirt waist of the same material. The

suit is white, and she wears with it a plain linen turn-down collar, such as she and thousands of other women buy in the shops at two for a quarter. Say her belt is white linen or white ribbon, equally commonplace. How distinct an impression does she make on you? Not a very significant one, unless her personality happens to be such that you forget the dress in the person.

Now, let us picture another girl who knows how much the little accessories of dress count. She is wearing the same white shirt-waist suit made in the same style; but there is a difference, a chicness, in the whole effect. You are conscious of it at first glance, though you don't know just what it is. But the second glance, which is sure to follow, is sure to tell you.

There are little individual touches in this girl's shirt-waist suit that make it a specially distinctive and attractive costume. There is her collar, for instance, a linen one to be sure, for that is the only appropriate collar to wear with a tailored shirt waist. But this one has a little over-collar of Irish lace, and the jabot worn with it has some of the same Irish lace as a finish. It is a jabot of the finest of plaited linen and it is in a new shape. The under part is plaited,

the centre forming a box plait which shows an inset of Irish lace. The over jabot is also plaited, but the linen before being plaited is cut so that it falls in two deep points. Both over and under jabots are edged with a narrow frill of cream-colour Valenciennes lace. The effect is novel and pretty. Then there is the belt of linen, too, but fastening in front with a buckle covered with the Irish crochet lace.

Perhaps, this shirt-waist girl, who looks well to the accessories of her dress, introduces a touch of colour in her otherwise white suit. Her linen turn-down collar may be embroidered in each corner with a small violet worked in violet floss, and her double-tab linen jabot may have its edges scalloped in violet. Then a violet may be embroidered in crest form on her pocket, or as a medallion to ornament her belt. If she carries a parasol, it is apt to be of violet silk, and her shoes and stockings are violet-hued too. This is the girl you remember, if for no other reason than just her clothes; while the young man who meets her carries away with him an ideal of "The Lady of the Violets."

But there are pretty sure to be other reasons, too, for remembering the girl who is capable of studying out charming little effects in her

clothes. She has resources of her own, and the more you know her, the better you like her. Insipidity of character predicates insipidity in dress.

The young woman, or the older woman for that matter, who has tried and found becoming some special accessory, should wear it so often that it is associated with her. She should make it her own. A bow or rosette in a certain unusual form, for instance, may be developed in different colours and materials and used in many different ways.

Take a rosette of black satin, framed in narrow frills of very yellow lace. When made rather large, it might be used as a finish for the back of a girdle and have depending from it two large black satin sash ends. The rosette used in this way might serve as the one necessary distinctive note to the costume. Then this same rosette might be made in miniature and be used to take the place of buttons on some soft frock light in colour. Again, the rosette, this time larger, might form a smart finishing touch to a plain hat.

The accessory developed in black is very apt to be becoming.

Just recall for yourself how well the woman with a long slender throat looks if her throat is



"This is the girl you remember"



enriched by a band of black velvet. It may be plain; it may be caught with diamond buckles; but just so long as it is black, it is becoming.

The black lace scarf has a magic touch of becomingness lurking in its folds, especially when worn with a white or delicately tinted silk or satin gown.

Right here let us emphasize the power of the scarf. It often gives the one redeeming colour note to a characterless gown. It is a help to the awkward woman, diverting] her attention from herself. It is magic to the graceful woman, the soft, waving web with which she allures and binds and holds. There is a fascination in the scarf. The Spanish *senorita* knows it. So did the ladies of Charles the Second's court, whose dreamy loveliness Lely has immortalized.

Garnitures of jet, especially in fringed effects, often transform a commonplace gown into a distinctive costume. A flat, black satin collar in a variety of shapes, with an appliqué of old lace or embroidered batiste upon it, may give this costume an almost unaccountable charm. Its shape must be decided upon according to its special adaptability to the wearer.

Always, let it be repeated, there must be

personal adaptation in order to secure personal effect.

Even so little a thing as the handkerchief may become a telling accessory of dress. The handkerchief has always been idealized; it peculiarly has the personal quality. It is dainty, or it is less than nothing. It retains the essence of personality — the shade of an individual perfume. It may be both a memento and a memory. Could all the handkerchiefs be recovered that have been stolen and treasured by lovers, the world's supply would not need increase for many years.

Then there is the belt, of which the poets of all ages have sung as the Girdle of Venus. It is really impossible to number the scalps that victorious woman has hanging from her belt. It generally is in fashion, and always should be; and to the woman who studies her own individuality and has a sense of the artistic it proves a fascinating accessory. In the belt, many times, lies the one effective touch of colour; while its odd buckle may give a novel and refreshing tone to the whole costume. Keep the belt inconspicuous if the waist is large. You may have it as deep and as unique of form as you please if the waist is small and tapering.

The bag, like the belt, is an important accessory; it also tells plainly the personality of the wearer. It may harmonize in tone with the costume, or it may smartly contrast with it; but it must be new in shape and suggest the prevailing fashion through a chicness of its own. There is but one thing to do with an old, dowdy bag. Throw it away.

All these accessories, while actively giving distinction, are themselves independent. They are little things often that may escape notice while causing notice. They are the blend that itself may be lost in the perfect union it produces. On the other hand, they are often the keynote by which the strain that has charmed is remembered.

Wealth may buy these things, or thrift may make them; but it is taste that must put them on.

Taste, then, is the one thing needful. Without it, a woman is clad; with it, a woman is dressed.

CHAPTER XII

SPECIAL WARDROBES

THE twin sister of individuality in dress is suitability in dress. The one suits the dress to the person; the other suits the dress to the occasion. In correct dress they each play an important role.

Nowadays the composite American woman is very busy in her work and play. It is a duty of modern dress to make her work more effective and her play more enjoyable.

The many and varied interests of the woman of to-day are shown in the great diversity of her dress; for as woman has developed, so her dress has developed with her.

Let us see how dress may make or mar these various parts a woman now fills on the stage of life.

There is the home woman. Let us consider her as a type first and foremost, as she should be considered. Her morning dress should reflect the home. It should be

as cheery and dainty as the breakfast over which she presides. It should set an example to children. A slattern may scold as much as she pleases, but she will still have slatterns about her.

Of course, the morning dress of the home woman must suit her position in life. If she is a busy housewife with the breakfast to superintend and the house to put in order, she should wear a trim, one-piece gown of some washable material like chambray or percale.

The colour should be becoming; the style simple. A shirt-waist suit, with the waist and skirt joined at the belt, will be found satisfactory, and it should button straight up the front, because the minutes in the morning have special flying propensities, and each second saved is a second that counts for twice as much. A turn-down collar of the material may be worn instead of a stiff linen collar, and sleeves may be three-quarter length, a style which always suggests charming domesticity. This little morning dress, however, should be modified to suit the individuality of the wearer. It will surely fulfil its mission if trimness is its chief characteristic.

Now if the home woman is the woman of leisure, her morning dress should reflect this

fact. She should dress to set off and give added charm to her surroundings.

She should have breakfast sacques, soft and frilly and delicate of colour, and skirts to wear with them. She may have wrappers, of course, but they must be glorified wrappers, crisp and pretty without a suggestion of a hurried rising and toilette. They should not, however, be elaborate tea-gowns, overtrimmed with ribbons and lace. The silk and chiffon boudoir resting gown to wear when lights are dim is not appropriate for breakfast wear in the broad sunlight.

Let the breakfast dress of the woman whose morning hours are not hurried emphasize daintiness and freshness. An Empire gown of challis, with a silk figure or stripe, trimmed with ribbon velvet, or a cotton crêpe, albatross or India silk gown, having just a touch of lace to add to its softness, would surely look well.

It is important, however, even with a negligée that the design of the gown be becoming to the wearer. No person of taste will look twice at a gown that anybody may wear.

Clothes for morning wear are for outdoors as well as indoors. In considering these special wardrobes, only general suggestions can be given — the outlines of the picture really —

the other details must be supplied by each individual wearer. In the last analysis it is individual taste that counts the most.

The correct costume for outdoor morning wear is the coat and skirt suit of some such fabric as serge, cheviot, or mannish suiting. Of course, tailored styles are the best, and inconspicuous colours. Leave the broadcloths and velvets for calling costumes, and let the laces and frills of dress be introduced there too.

With the evening comes more elaborate dress. The fashionable woman needs dinner gowns, theatre and opera gowns and ball costumes. The more cultivated she is, the more she has made the art of dress the study it should be, the finer and more appropriate are the distinctions between these attires.

In planning them she must first have a definite idea of the prevailing mode as to fabrics and outline. Then, if she is wise, she will modify the present style to her own type; and whether she is planning one gown or a dozen gowns, let each be distinctive and each suit the occasion on which it is to be worn.

It is well to bear in mind that the trimming of a gown may give a distinctive touch to it, and that in a measure it acts as an index to the dress, putting the gown in its own class.

Never use the same type of trimming on your evening gowns. If the dancing frock is trimmed with artificial flowers of chiffon and satin, have the ball gown trimmed with fur, or gold or silver embroideries. A woman with one trimming is a woman of one-dress idea, and not much of an idea at that.

It goes without saying that a little good trimming is better than a lot of inferior trimming. When economy must be given at least a passing thought, a good quality of velvet or brocade is a better investment than some prevailing fad in silks or even some exquisite shade of chiffon. There is always the next year to bear in mind.

The business woman has special dress needs of her own. Negligées and dainty dressing sacques play no part in her morning wardrobe. Smart looking tailored shirt waists and well-cut skirts take their place. The well-poised young business woman is prepared for every emergency. She never becomes an object of solicitude to her employer. No matter how varied and villainous the weather, she should have clothes to suit it.

Her wardrobe must either be an extensive one, or her clothes must all be selected to play a double part. Among the necessities should

be a long separate coat, made in a conventional style, a coat which will not soon look out of date, a perfectly made tailored suit, and shirt waists of both silk and durable wash fabrics; also a generous supply of good shoes, walking gloves, and smart belts and neckwear. At least two hats are also necessary; a distinct suit hat and a hat which will look well with any clothes.

There are many special wardrobes for the well-dressed woman which should be planned along the same lines whether she goes out to business or stays at home. Clothes for a rainy day, for outdoor sports, and for travelling may be mentioned. In all these instances, the woman who would be correctly dressed must be careful to avoid the incongruous note.

Don't put your money in a well-made, smart-looking cravenette coat for instance, and then wear with it a hat which has distinct picture lines. The plain tailored soft felt or rough straw walking hat or turban, with a quill or merely a ribbon band and rosette for trimming, belongs with the raincoat. Remember to have every detail of the rainy day wardrobe in harmony. Don't wear light gloves, or shoes with French heels. Have stout shoes, and rubbers, too, that will fit them.

If you are going automobiling, dress as though you were. Let your costume, even to the minutest detail, be a protection. Remember that dust and wind will go with you when flying through the country in a motor car. Don't wear motor togs to attract attention. Just wear sensible clothes, and keep the colours, if not dark, at least neutral. It is unwise to look like either a fairy or a fright.

In special wardrobes for athletic sports avoid masculine effects. Remember that she who assumes mannishness admits the inferiority of her sex. It is the womanly woman that men fall in love with, not poor copies of themselves.

Don't wear mannish outing shirts, for instance, with your golf or tennis skirt. You can be just as comfortable and play the game fully as well if you select a simple blouse which has enough of a dainty look of femininity about it to proclaim at first glance that it was made for a nice girl and not for a mere man. The first glance will not be the only glance, you may be sure.

In travelling, more than under any other circumstances, is a woman's sense of fitness put to the test.

Some women have an idea that a journey

is a time for display. It is — but only for a display of common sense. When a woman travels, she should dress inconspicuously. It is not necessary for her to wear her fine clothes; the consciousness that she has them will more than answer the purpose.

If “By their clothes ye shall judge them” is a fair test, it is a regretful truth that foreigners must think that many of our women who travel abroad are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Don't take your fine frocks to Europe. If an occasion comes up abroad when a fine gown is needed, buy it there if possible, and pay the duty on it, too, when you return. The less clothes a woman takes with her on her travels the better off she is. A fat pocketbook is better than a big trunk.

But though the travelling wardrobe should be small, it must be right. Every woman who thinks can plan it best for herself. But she will be wise not to forget the long coat which will entirely cover the dress, the simply made dinner gown which can be worn low neck or high neck by means of a guimpe and which should be of some material that will not lose all its good looks in packing — like foulard silk or pongee. Clothes never should travel

for their health, by the way; for there is no improvement in it for them.

Then there is the walking skirt, made a bit shorter than usual, and the comfortable shirt waists of outing flannels, cotton cheviot and madras. Of course, the short skirt needs to have a coat to match, and a coat set or two to change the effect on occasions. Then there are the very necessary veils and the comfortable shoes; to say nothing of a restful pair of slippers.

Even for a long trip abroad, two hats are quite sufficient; a travelling hat plain and tailored in effect, and one with which a veil may be nicely worn, and what is known as a demi-dress hat of velvet or satin or straw, according to the season.

This hat should be of the adaptable sort, and different trimmings should be packed with it, such as a band of gold and a satin rosette, a crown of silver lace, a big chou of some pretty bright shade of velvet — any trimming novelty in fact which can be packed without injury and has a transforming quality.

There is a lesson for women to learn from special wardrobes. It is that the well-dressed woman is always the well-dressed woman.

No matter what the change or what the emergency, she fits the scene.

First, one accepts her naturally as a very part of the scene. Then one is impressed with the fact that she is adding charm to it. And then comes the knowledge that she is able to do this through the suitability of her dress.

The quality of dress is like to the quality of a pair of scales. When it varies either too much or too little, even by the merest trifle, then it is incorrect.

CHAPTER XIII

JEWELLERY

HAVE you ever thought of reading a woman's character by the jewellery she wears? If not, try it. You will find it an interesting study; for it will tell you much that neither you nor she knows.

In fact, jewellery is a key to the character of its wearer. The woman who wears the right jewels at the right time has gone far toward being the right woman in the right place. That is to say, she is in harmony with her surroundings.

Through her study and understanding of herself and her adornment she realizes that jewels count even more for individual effectiveness than do gowns. They have their special harmonies of colour. When these match with the harmony of the person, the effect is most beautiful. When they do not, the effect is barbaric and jarring.

Jewels of themselves are sympathetic — far more so than flowers, which cannot endure. In

a way they partake of their wearer's nature and share in her fortunes. The ancients firmly believed in the sympathy of jewels. Pearls were said to fade or crumble when the one who had worn them long or lovingly, died, while the evil reputation which has so persistently clung to the opal, diminishing much the price if not the value of this rare and exquisite gem, is another trace of this old superstition.

The faith in talismans, amulets, and stones of ill omen continued undisputed during the middle ages and is strong to this day. The truth lies in the association. Through their durability, jewels gather unto themselves the sweet and bitter memories of years. They may represent a family or even an age; or again, only one precious event in the life of the wearer. When you see a woman who wears continuously a ring or a brooch which is far less beautiful than many of the gems she owns and shuns, then you may know that such a jewel is an intimate friend that encourages, comforts or warns with a knowledge as full and true as that which lies deep in her own bosom.

Now, women may draw a lesson worth learning from the study of jewellery and its indiscriminate use.

Individual taste should be followed in the

selection of jewellery, for it becomes in a way a criterion of the taste of the wearer. If it be crude, grotesque of design or gaudy, then she who wears it advertises herself as lacking refinement.

Many an ugly or inappropriate piece of jewellery is but an emblem of membership in the vast and ever increasing Society of the Vulgar.

Therefore, don't buy jewellery indiscriminately. It cannot be properly bought by the weight or the sample. Let it have some other value besides its commercial one. Buy, if you can afford it, what especially appeals to you, and then wear it lovingly.

In regard to imitation jewellery, the rule is simple and without exception: The genuine or none. But what about the poor who have an inherent love of ornament as well as the rich? Such a rule, it may be said, would bar the poor from ever having any jewellery to wear with their best clothes; and then they would never feel well dressed.

Well, poverty does prevent many material joys, but it may enhance that meek and quiet spirit which the Bible advises for ornament. And many a poor mother takes as much pride in her children as did Roman

Cornelia when she said, "These are my jewels."

After all, the heart is the mine which can produce the rarest and most precious of gems.

But even the poor woman or girl may have one piece of jewellery through inheritance or saving. To her there will be much more joy of possession than ever comes to the woman of wealth and fashion who keeps her jewels, rare, for the most part, in a safety-deposit vault, and is dogged by a detective when she does wear them. The poor woman makes a friend of her one gem; she treasures it, she loves it. It is not so much having as knowing and prizing that counts.

This woman of wealth, generally speaking, is not on very intimate terms with her profusion of jewels — who ever does love a crowd? Many of them she scarcely knows by sight. Frequently, one means no more to her than another; for the meaning of each is its cost. They are slaves that help to adorn her; and then, when their duty is done, are put out of sight.

Remember, a sham has no enduring qualities. Imitation jewellery looks best on the day it is bought, if it has any good looks at all. It must be taken on faith — a most restricted

faith—which no one can experience except the wearer herself.

Of course, it is only the cheap imitations which are meant, like the large solitaire diamond that can be purchased for \$4.95. Such imitation gems are generally displayed in shop windows ablaze with electric lights. These windows are lighted in this way for a twofold purpose: one to allure the unwary passerby, and the other to supply for the time of purchase the essential sparkle and lustre. The “solitaire” only shows its true nature when away from these dazzling lights; and then it looks like what it is in reality, a piece of glass. But then it is too late, for both it and its purchaser have been sold.

Now, it is unwise to pay \$4.95 for a sham. It is unwise to spend the money just to emphasize a shoddy trait in one's character. It is unwise, also, because for the same sum a piece of hand-wrought jewellery may be bought, something rather small, to be sure, but having intrinsic worth and good of its kind. Why buy a ring set with a bit of worthless though cleverly cut glass for \$4.95 when you can have a lace-pin, for instance, of hand-wrought silver, set with a small but genuine topaz or amethyst?

The semi-precious stones, like the aquama-

rine, the turquoise, the olivine and the tourmaline, which are so much in vogue to-day, must not, in any way, be confounded with imitation "jewels." They have an intrinsic value and beauty of their own; and many times they give the finishing and appropriate touch to the costume in a way no other ornament can.

These semi-precious stones are most used in hand-wrought jewellery, which year by year, since the revival of the handicrafts, has grown more beautiful. To-day, no matter how varied and costly her collection of conventional jewellery may be, a woman of wealth and taste wishes to possess at least one or two rings and brooches that are hand wrought and have been made exclusively for her, with the agreement that the design shall never be duplicated. In such as these there lies distinction.

Here again may be noted woman's growing fondness for things individual. It is not only the semi-precious stones that are a fad of to-day, but there is a decided vogue for old-fashioned jewellery which has good reason at its back. It seems that the more old-fashioned jewellery is, the more new-fashioned it may become. There is no deterioration for what was good at the start. It remains good for all time, with a chance of getting better.

Of course fashions change; but it is the change of a revolution. Presently back again into style come the corals, the jets, the long chains, the pendant ear-rings, and all the rest. (Fashion is fleeting but jewellery is lasting.) The heavens may be clouded over, but behind the clouds the stars still shine. So, too, tranquilly glow real jewels, waiting again to come into their own.)

How to buy jewellery, when to wear it, and when not to wear it, are subjects well worth considering. In buying jewellery it is wise to go to the jeweller of highest reputation. And this advice applies equally to the grande dame selecting a string of matched pearls, and the little shop-girl who has saved up so long and so self-sacrificingly for a brooch or a collar pin.

The difference in price won't be much; the difference in quality may be. (Genuine jewellery is aristocratic; cheap jewellery is shoddy.)

The jeweller's business is more than a trade. It is an ancient and honourable craft. In some lands, those who followed it were deemed noble. Go, then, to an old-established house, where proprietors and clerks have grown up with their wares and both know and love them. The purchase of a piece of jewellery from such a place is a liberal education in how to wear

jewellery and how to care for it; and it carries its own guaranty.

Possibly one reason why the woman who loves her jewels comes to believe that they have a sympathy for her and that they look better on her than on any one else is because she takes care of them. All jewellery requires the daintiest of care. It must be polished and kept from the dust and dirt. Of course, it looks its best when it is at its best; and the same may be said of its wearer. When she is careful and particular of her jewellery she is careful and particular of herself. This is only an extension of that nicety which gives to her her distinctive charm.

In considering when to wear jewellery, remember and keep remembering that jewellery is sympathetic. It will look out of place when it is out of place, like a diamond pin worn with a linen shirt waist, or gold beads on a lately bereaved widow's bowed neck! (It calls for fitness more than any other accessory of dress; and the louder it calls, the more conspicuous is this lack of fitness.)

Ceremony alone can warrant a lavish display of jewels. Some women go to a bridge party as if to a coronation.)

Some women, too, forget that jewels, if they have the right lustre and the right colour,

have actual beautifying qualities. Many a woman with brown eyes and tawny brown hair may add greatly to her appearance by wearing topazes and old gold jewellery. Corals, which are again in fashion, give just the needed note of colour to the dark-haired woman who is paler than she wishes to be. Wear jewels that match your eyes in colour, if possible, and observe how much prettier your eyes look and how greatly their distinctive hue is emphasized.

The woman who has studied her jewels in relation to herself comes to use them as the artist does the paints on his palette, each one to produce the present effect or to be kept for some other fitting occasion. Jewels used correctly should blend and add beauty to the different parts of the costume. They should light and soften the features of the wearer. They should give perfection to the picture.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CARE OF CLOTHES

TREAT your clothes with disrespect, neglect to care for them, and what will happen? They will make you hide your head in shame fast enough; not only on their account because of their appearance, but on your account because of yours.

There is no escaping the fact that clothes will reveal; they will betray.

A comparison between French thrift and American waste is often made in the matter of food. A like comparison, even more instructive to our women and our homes, may be made in the matter of clothes.

A French woman always looks nice, because she is nice about her clothes. She takes the utmost care of them; she never rags them out. Like a good friend, they stand by her to the end.

How is it with very many American women? After the first wearing they seem to lose interest in their clothes. Indeed, it is the getting,

and not the having that counts with them. In the hurry to accomplish all the many things they crowd into a day, they give their clothes, as far as their care is concerned, but a passing thought. They hang them up carelessly, often in a packed closet. They brush them occasionally, when they happen to think of it and they have the time, and they don't put their hearts as they should into the brushing. They are thinking of the Opening they have seen advertised and of the new styles, you see.

And as a result? Well, the misused clothes have a little revenge of their own. They look shabby before their time. They persist in wrinkling and ripping just when you want them to look their best. Clearly do they illustrate the perversity of inanimate things, which very often are not as inanimate as they seem.

It is a prime duty for every woman to care for her clothes. It means economy which will count. It means more charm for herself. It means that the story they inevitably tell she will be glad to have every one hear.

The care of clothes is a vital matter in the family of moderate means. The crying need of more clothes and still more clothes to follow would be less frequent if clothes after they were bought were given perfect care.

Habit gives this care — the persistent, watchful habit which will not let up until everything is “just so,” as the saying is. Such a habit of caring for clothes is well worth acquiring.

The careful woman always has two helpers close at hand; a threaded needle and a brush broom. When these have done their perfect work, then there is a third helper that should also be on call — a safe and sure cleaning fluid. There are plenty such on the market — not gasoline, mark you, which never should be used except in the open air, and generally not then.

Those trite sayings, “A stitch in time saves nine” and “Never put off until to-morrow what you can do to-day,” should be remembered and applied to the care of clothes. But the truth is that often, too often, not even the nine stitches are ever taken; nor is anything done to-day that can possibly be put off until to-morrow. Again the rush and scramble of the times!

Get the habit of taking the needed stitch and wielding the necessary brush before any garment is put away. After a while you would no more neglect to do so than you would neglect to wash your face.

And where it is put away and how it is put away are both matters of vital importance.

To-day, of all days, there is a place for everything.

This applies even to the close quarters of a small apartment. So many are the new and clever space-saving devices that it would seem as if a new one appeared on the market every day. There are hangers for coats, skirts, waists, and for one-piece dresses. There are special trunks for special garments. There are wardrobes so arranged that they protect and hold an almost incredible amount of clothes. There are chiffonières that are made with a door and have the most surprising of compartments inside. They contain drawers for waists and underwear, and a lower, deeper drawer for shoes, to say nothing of hat cushions for the safe holding of four or more hats.

There are boxes galore, and most attractive ones, too. They are frequently upholstered to match the draperies of the room. They are provided with castors so that they may be easily moved about. Sometimes they are tucked under the bed, and sometimes they are used as seats; but at all times they are a convenience.

Then there are the rods for closets from which coat and skirt hangers are suspended. These are easily arranged, and they triple the capacity of any closet.

But there is work to be done before the clothes are put away. Brush your hat when you take it off, and then put it in its own special box. Many of the handboxes to-day are quite fascinating affairs. They are lined with silk or cretonne and are fragrant with sachet.

Brush your skirt, see that its hooks and eyes are not hanging, put in all the stitches necessary, give it a vigorous shaking for good measure, and then hang it on its form. To keep the skirt in immaculate condition, it should be slipped into a big, roomy bag. If space will allow, a skirt bag of black silk or sateen made with a drawstring at the top will be most effective in protecting the skirt from dust.

Remember that dust we not only are, but that we live, move and have our being in dust. Therefore, brush, sisters, brush with care, whenever you come in from the air.

Clothes need the rest cure, and they are very responsive to it. But don't send them off to the cure until you have given them a taste of active treatment. They should be brushed, cleaned and pressed and then covered over before they are marched away from the frivolities of the world. A week of seclusion will do wonders for tired-out clothes.

If furs are not sent to cold storage, they

should be well shaken before they are put away, and they never should be laid flat. The best way to keep a muff is on a rod. In fact, it is desirable to swing all fur garments on a rod rather than store them in a box. If you can't give your furs cold air, then give them fresh air.

Be sure, in using boxes to hold your waists, scarfs, hosiery, etc., to have each box labelled plainly; and never put an article in the box of another article. That would be confusion worse confounded.

The accessories of dress need special care. Never put gloves away in a little bunch. Don't roll them. They should be carefully smoothed out. An inexpensive glove case can be made out of a strip of sash ribbon, with a roll of padding at one end, which may be sacheted or not as preferred. The other end is pointed, and a ribbon is attached to it which is used to tie the case together. This may be embroidered with one's monogram. The same rather narrow ribbon is run down the centre of the inside of the case. It is tacked with feather-stitching here and there, according to how many pairs of gloves the case is made to hold. The gloves are folded and then slipped under the ribbons, which keep them in place. The case rolls up, and occupies but little room.

A deep, narrow box is also convenient for holding gloves.

In caring for belts, first smooth them out, and then roll and put in a box which will hold them compactly.

Handkerchiefs of course must be folded and piled in a box or case. Though the handkerchief case is a time-honoured affair, especially as a present for a young clergyman who will never use it, the woman who cares for her things will find that handkerchiefs rumple less in a box, and so she won't use one either.

And veils? It is inspiring what some women can do for their veils; just as it is awful what some women will do to them. Veils should be kept in a box.

It was a canny old lady who, being anxious as to the character of the young woman her son had chosen for a wife, managed to get a peep at this young woman's bureau drawers. Talk about the skeleton in every household! The bureau is a favourite hiding place for the dreadful thing. Either the bureau is neat and orderly with every compartment having its separate use, with every box always in its own place, and every loose article always where it should be and as it should be, or it is a hopeless jumble. Think of the frenzied hunt, the turn-

ing over, the tossing about, the piling up and the casting down, with the inevitable man consuming his soul with impatience in the parlour.

Eternal vigilance is the price of a faultless wardrobe, whether it is a modest one or a most elaborate and fashionable one. There is no royal road to that distinction in dress which comes from perfection of detail. It means care and more care and still more care every time.

Again comes the frequent lesson of individuality in dress. It cannot be escaped. As the woman is — so her clothes are.

Give to your clothes, then, the dainty personal habits of which you yourself are so proud; and you may take pride in them, as they will take pride in you.

Above all, remember, that if women would devote themselves to the care of clothes rather than to the care for clothes, they would be wiser and happier. What is more to the point, they would be far more attractive. There is no one so fascinating as my lady immaculate.

CHAPTER XV

DRESS IN ITS RELATION TO AGE

BEAUTY is said to be eternal. But it is different with clothes. They should not outlast the stage of life which they mark. From babyhood to old age, womankind is continually changing — trying to keep pace with the years, sometimes to hasten them, oftentimes to hide them.

In general, it is a rule worth following that the clothes of one period are not the proper clothes for any other period.

But how seldom is the rule adhered to and how many and how pitiful are the mistakes made.

Illustrating dress in its relation to age, let us take first the most pitiful type of all and then be rid of it — the woman who is growing old and who is striving for youth with a fierce, hopeful, hopeless zeal. In her effort to look what she is not, she misses the true meaning of dress. She does not know,

and apparently does not care to know, that dress should be the body's complement; that they should always match and agree with each other.

The more the woman who is growing old strives to hide the fact in her dress, the more evident it becomes. And how the struggle must surprise old Father Time!

What a caricature she makes of herself — this woman who is growing old. She dyes her hair. She makes up her face. She dresses as her granddaughter might.

And what happens? Nature revolts, for she hates things artificial. So she relentlessly exposes them.

The dyed hair has its revenge. Instead of softening the features, it only brings out the lines of age more sharply, and makes the face glare out as ghastly as a death mask. Indeed, such a face is a mask and no one knows it better than the woman behind it. She never dares to let her face express an emotion, for she realizes that one little smile of welcome or cheer might make it crack; so she keeps it rigid.

Then her poor, exhausted body finds the fashions and frills of extreme youth like a giant's robe, too heavy to endure.



*“What a caricature she makes of herself — this woman
who is growing old”*

Who would care to preserve this picture, to hand it down as a sacred heirloom?

Old age, however, has its styles and fashions that rightfully belong to it — the dress which has grown old with the wearer.

Nature is always kindly toward her own ravages, when they are accepted. She softens the wrinkles by the smile and gives glory to the crown of white hair. How lovable the old lady who is appropriately dressed.

Women who are growing old need not wear out-of-fashion styles to be appropriately dressed. If it happens to be the day of the close-fitting sleeve and the scant skirt, it is not necessary, just because of their age, that they wear big sleeves and voluminous skirts. They should recognize in selecting their clothes the trend of the modes, but the extremes of fashion, of course, they should never consider.

Subdued colours are for the women who are growing old, and soft laces and fabrics. Dress should be a harmony, not a discord.

The woman in the sixties should not wear clothes like the girl in her teens. If she does, her dress will be a burlesque.

Dress not only bears an important relation to age, but to youth as well.

How children should dress is not only of

consequence to the welfare of the child, but also the growing girl and the woman, for the overdressed little girl and young girl are apt to become overdressed old women.

It is hardly necessary to say that children's clothes should be adapted to work and play. The wise father who pays the bills will attend to that.

And the wise mother? She will see that her little girl's clothes are first of all comfortable, which means that they must be simple of design, properly made and of the right warmth and weight to suit the changing seasons. And in addition they should be artistic.

Beauty in dress will not come and will not last without an effort.

A little girl should be taught to regard her clothes as she does her person, as sacred. Each should have scrupulous care.

Every mother knows, or should know, how instructive a plaything the doll can be made. The child who loves her doll will take pride in keeping it pretty. She will soon learn to discriminate in its dress.

First, dollie dear is hugged and treasured whether she happens to be a thing of real beauty or not. She may be a rag doll with

certain but pronounced peculiarities of feature, but dress, right dress, brings a chance of improvement even to a rag doll. And soon her little mother says, "I'll make her lovelier than she ever has been before." That's the next step.

Few little mothers of dollie-dears, no matter how youthful they may be, are lacking in a knowledge of appropriate dress for their children.

Imagine a dollie-dear going to a real party, the sort of party where cambric tea and lovely sugar cookies are to be served, in anything but a nice, fresh party dress. Her little mother knows that she must be dressed to suit the importance of the occasion; and you will find she generally is.

The practice of dressing her doll correctly will do much toward teaching the little girl good taste in her own dress. She will soon make dollie-dear a model for herself.

The mother who gives serious thought to her little girl's dress-needs will think even more seriously over the selection of clothes for her young, growing daughter. There is no prettier sight than the young girl whose dress matches her years. If once it gets ahead of them, it is apt to stay ahead of them, making her old before she has been young.

Then, too, there is a special danger for the young girl who wants to dress older than her years. This desire in itself gives her wrong habits of thought in regard to herself. She, also, wants to be older than her years.

The young girl who seeks to look like a young lady cannot be natural in her manner. It might muss her clothes. She constantly associates certain qualities with her grown-up finery, just as flirting goes with a fan. She thinks as a woman before she has learned to think as a young girl. And what sort of a woman, may we not ask? One who has to masquerade, apes.

Young womanhood is a less definite stage than girlhood. Circumstance may prolong it or cut it short, dragging it into spinsterhood or enriching it into wifehood.

It is wise for the young woman in any event to dress as young as she looks, but no younger.

It is wise for her to improve her good points and lessen her bad points by dress just as she may do it by her manner or disposition. But paints, powders, pads and dyes should not be used, because they are useless. Generally speaking, they only make a bad matter worse.

With youth, health, and beauty, the young

woman has a wide range of dress; indeed it is only limited by good taste.

The world of dress also lies at the feet of the young matron for her to pick and choose. She may be a butterfly if only she will remember she is a young matron.

There is a fine dignity to wifehood which should not be hurt by frivolity or allurements. The ideal young matron is a bit stately in her assured style and position. She wins admiration rather than excites it. The most charming queen is the queen consort—the queen of the home.

With years such queenliness increases in charm. The finished woman doesn't dress young. She doesn't dress old. She dresses herself at her best as she is. No need to tell her what is the style; she knows what is her style, indeed, she herself is the style.

She has formed her own model of herself as she would be; and to its ideal loveliness she keeps approaching.

Does the world of dress lie at the feet of the spinster to pick and choose? Does she ever have the privilege of picking and choosing anything?

Well, there are spinsters and spinsters: the sensible spinster who is attractive, and

the foolish spinster who is deplorable. Each in her own way picks and chooses, but the one dignifies her own station by her dress, while the other makes it ridiculous.

It is better to accept gracefully than to struggle grotesquely and have to accept in the end.

So many young women now prefer the single life that there is no sting to being an old maid unless it is self-inflicted. Therefore, there should no longer be any such person as the silly spinster. She was the outgrowth of humiliating conditions long since past. There really was no place for her so she kept trying to step into some other place; only she didn't step, she missed. The composed, broad-minded, reliant, capable single woman of to-day has no use for mitts and curls. She has a dignified position of her own which she keeps dignifying. No cast-off clothing for her. She knows what to get and she gets it.

Women are gradually shaking off the fallacy that only girlishness is charming. The fact is that it is charming — in girls. No woman is too old to be charming unless she becomes artificial. Indeed charm is a jewel to which each year should add a gem.



“Then she becomes an inspiration and dress has done its perfect work”



CHAPTER XVI

THE AFFLICTED IN APPEARANCE

DRESS may give an added touch of charm to the beautiful woman.

Dress may yield an insight into character to the thoughtful mind.

But to the afflicted in appearance, the anxious many, dress should come as an inspiration, a comforter; whispering confident hope of better things.

They are a sorry lot, the afflicted in appearance; and you meet them at every turn of the way, each with her own pathetic tale of woes peculiarly unjust and cruel.

There is the too-fat woman, who is always sighing, or puffing, for the figure of a sylph. There is the too-thin woman who has worn herself thinner over her hapless condition. Then there is the homely girl who mutely apologizes for living; the fussy woman whose nerves are always on edge and who quickly gets yours into the same condition; and the

helpless, hopeless dowdy—young, middle-aged and old—who is too tired to care.

Their collective case is a sad one; for woman should and would be beautiful. The story is told of the undeniably plain woman, who upon hearing her clergyman pray for “those afflicted in mind, body or estate,” murmured despairingly, “I shouldn’t mind all the rest if only I were not afflicted in looks.”

Well, dress is not a cure-all but it is an alleviative. It can make bad better though it may not make it best. Within the very comfortable middle-land of attractiveness, there is no reason why the afflicted in appearance should not live and thrive.

But they must not lift their hands imploringly to Fashion and then believe that their part is ended; for this particular goddess helps those who help themselves. They must work as well as pray.

Style calls for intelligence; and to dress so that defects are hidden and good points emphasized means hard study—the study of form, colour, draping and above all of the proper line.

One must learn how to lift dress from a lifeless covering into a living part of oneself. One must learn how to select and wear clothes

so that the simplest of them will be "just the costume." One must know oneself — know all of the worst before one can get back some of the best.

The transformation of dress is not instantaneous. It is a picture which gradually develops into distinction and beauty.

Never forget that it is well for every woman, no matter how afflicted she is in appearance, to have in her own mind an ideal image of herself. Some day, through study and practice, she will measure up to the full stature of it.

Woman may not be her own best dress-maker, but she should be her own best dress adviser. The handiest maid a woman can have to help her in dressing is self-knowledge.

As you meet them here and there along the way, perhaps the most troubled of these patients requiring skilful dress-treatment is the fat woman, the too-fat woman. You all know her, and you all know the humour of her, that one joke which she alone cannot see. She is so helpless — but often that is the very trouble. Often the too-fat woman hopes to keep all the ease and luxury, which has bred her too, too, solid flesh, and yet have it melt. Well, it won't do it.

In some cases, she may reduce herself becomingly through care and self-denial; but not always. Sometimes obesity is natural; and to pervert nature is both dangerous and disappointing. The wisest thing to do with all anti-fat nostrums is to throw them out of the window; having been careful first to see that the dog or cat won't be able to get them. Every one knows how unbecoming is a dress that is too large. Even more unbecoming than this is a skin that hangs in folds from improper reduction.

But in all cases intelligent dress will do some good, and in no case will it do any harm. It may give grace; it may even give charm. The very fat woman often has fine hair and features. She often has beautiful skin and hands and feet. Dress may so enhance these attractions that all the rest, yes, *all* the rest, is overlooked.

Does not the ardent lover write sonnets to his lady's eyebrows without a thought of her pug nose underneath? Love is never so blind as when enraptured by seeing just a little.

The too-fat woman must first take herself severely in hand. She must curb the exuberant fondness she always seems to have for colours and fabrics which are possible

only for a slender, willowy figure. Of course what she can't have, she most wants to have, even though the having will bring its own worst punishment.

Before she can have an ideal image of herself as she should be, she must first clearly have an image of herself as she is. If she will learn to array this first mental image in the light shades, conspicuous designs and over elaborate trimmings of her vagrant fancy and to study their awful effect, there is no danger of her choosing them for the second mental image.

The stout woman then must avoid extremes in style; they are designed for a model which she knows very well she is not and cannot be. She must wear clothes that suggest long lines. She must shun costumes that fit as if moulded to the form. She must not look as if she were poured into her gowns; for there is so very much of her that, in some places and always in the wrong places, she is sure to look as if she had spilled over a bit. This is one of the instances where a perfect fit is fatal.

She must try to look comfortable in her gowns, and as if they were fitted to her; and not as if she had tried to fit herself to them, and had had troubles of her own in so doing.

She must consider every little detail of her dress, for her natural tendency is to make a big detail of it. For instance, if her shoulders are narrow and her bust large, the way her waist is trimmed is of vital importance. If braid, an embroidered band or lace insertion is used, it should run from the middle of the shoulder seam straight down to the waist line. There should be no cut-off effect; but the longest line possible should be secured.

No matter what the latest Fashion edict may be, the woman, with the large arm should not wear a skin-tight sleeve; neither should the arm-hole be emphasized nor trimming be arranged in horizontal lines. One does not look to the pin-cushion or the sausage for an artistic type in dress.

The stout woman should never have her waist cut round at the neck. The square neck or the V shaped neck will prove much more becoming. And here is a little suggestion worth remembering. In cutting the waist out either square or in a V have the opening come as close to the collar line at the shoulder as possible.

The very fat woman should give special and intelligent thought to her corset. She must not put her figure into a rigid, heavily

boned vise. She must wear a corset which not only conforms to her own individual figure, not the ideal figure, mind, but also hygienically moulds it into graceful lines and at least gives the effect of trimness.

Corset-making has reached such excellence to-day that the right corset for every sort of figure can readily be obtained; while many corsets are really figure reducers or figure builders, whichever the need requires.

The stout woman who has little money to spend on dress should economize in her gowns and their accessories rather than in her corset. The corset is the foundation to build on; and if that is wrong even a costly Paris frock, designed by a dress artist, will prove a failure.

The too-fat woman should remember that she will be happier and incidentally her friends will be also, if she does not constantly dwell on her size. Let her do her best for herself with the aid of a competent dressmaker; and then let her straightway forget that she is any larger than she wishes to be.

Close up to the head of the procession of the afflicted in appearance is the too-thin woman. Though the too-fat woman may sigh the louder, the too-thin woman sighs even more soulfully. Indeed, she looks like

a sigh long drawn out. She too, is unhappy. But let her be comforted by this basic truth: it is easier to build out than to trim down. The too-thin woman is a frame; the too-fat woman is an obstacle. Perfect health will help the too-thin woman — indeed, there is no one too afflicted in appearance to be beyond the magic of health — and so, too, will a tranquil mind. Often the woman who worries because she is thin, is thin because she worries.

That Fashion is capricious and everchanging of mind is helpful to the thin woman, for she is sure to find among the many styles some one which will make her look her best. The average thin woman comes to depend much upon paddings. But in this, generally speaking, she makes a mistake. It is hard to breathe the breath of life into the artificial form; and even then it is anything but dependable. Though the too-thin woman may think there is nothing worse than no hips, she will know better when her false hips slip out of place. It is better to be nothing than grotesque.

The too-thin woman must avoid the straight up-and-down-lines. She may look with approval at tunic skirts in all styles, and fichus and large collars will add to the becomingness of her waists. She may wear any

sort of sleeve but a long, tight one; and in fabrics and colours she has a large variety to choose from. Of course, she must never let her eye rest for a moment on a striped fabric; but then she knows this without being told; or if she doesn't there is no use in telling her.

She may wear checks and big ones, too, which her fat sister longs for yet must be denied. She must study how to dress her neck, though it would be impossible to hint that it is likely to be scrawny. At all events, the guimpe with the high stock collar should be her standby — for reasons. Dutch necks and round necks are not for her.

The most becoming way to dress her neck in fact is to wear a guimpe, if this suits the style of her gown, and to have this guimpe made of tulle or fancy net, with the high collar finished at the top with a band or fold of satin, either black or matching the shade of the frock. This little touch of colour at the throat is sure to prove becoming; and it very successfully detracts from the height of the collar.

Filmy materials, which drape gracefully, are best for the too-thin woman. In street clothes she should avoid severity of line. For instance, she should never wear a severely plain, mannish, tailored suit.

She requires essentially feminine fashions; softness and frills whenever they are possible are always for her.

But, dear me; the too-thin woman's troubles are nothing compared to those of the homely girl — at least from the homely girl's discouraged view-point. Generally speaking, she is so young without being youthful; so faded, so forlorn, without being passé. Why, a frame to hang clothes on would really seem a more hopeful model, and the worst of it is she knows it. Plain Jane she is and plain Jane she must be until the end of the chapter. Haven't her sisters and her cousins and her aunts all said so, to say nothing of her little brother?

But no; this need not be so, if plain Jane will only stop thinking that it is so. She must learn to take a pride in herself. To the pretty girl, pride is poison; but to the homely girl, it is a tonic. One to dress well must dress with spirit.

Very often this poor plain girl is nothing more than what the farmers call a "late ripe." She is sluggish of development. She needs nurture. She too, should have an ideal image of herself; a lovely-to-look-at-image. It will help her in improving her own appearance.

The homely girl should get a bit of dash in her clothes. She should avoid neutral and sombre colours. She should wear hats with decided lines, and faced with a colour which she is sure would be becoming, if only she were different. Well, let her wear it, and she will be different.

If she has one good point, she should exert herself to make that good point beautiful. For instance, if there are dull gold lights in her brown hair, she should work over her tresses until the gold lights shimmer and glow like sunshine.

The homely girl should strive to be the personification of neatness. Once that, she can take heart with reason; for the immaculate girl is always good to look upon, from New York to Cathay.

But what about the woman who doesn't care — the dowdy woman who doesn't even know she is afflicted in appearance because she doesn't take the trouble to look at herself? Really, she should be treated as one mentally unsound; she should be taken in hand by her friends. She should be taught that with a proper and pleasant appearance one may bear sorrow more resignedly and trouble more bravely; and that one may struggle on more persistently and fight with a lighter heart.

The dowdy woman should be made to see herself exactly as she is. She should be taught her dress faults. Undoubtedly she will find that indifference is the first and the worst of them; and that is easily overcome. Let even the dowdy woman who says she doesn't care see herself looking really charming just once; and never again will she sink back into her old ways.

It is the duty of each human being to try to make the world brighter and happier. It is all very well for the woman who has lost heart to turn herself into a mere bundle of clothes. There may be consolation in this loss of self respect, to her; but it is an essentially selfish proceeding.

What is the real meaning of the word "becoming" as applied to dress?

It is dress that is right, appropriate and suited to the scene and the wearer.

Such a dress the world expects of every woman; for it has come to be the mark of the dignity and power of the sex. Dress is woman's kingdom; it is cowardly of her to abdicate. That was a fine example set by the grand dames of the ancient régime when they put on their richest costumes to ride on the tumbril to the guillotine.

Whatever the circumstance or crisis of life, a woman is better off for being fitly dressed.

But she should remember to be pleasant about it. The fussy woman is afflicted in appearance, even though she be comely of face and form, and appropriately attired. She should cultivate ease of manner and bearing. She should learn to let well enough alone. The best effect is the unconscious effect. One who is scratched by the thorns cares little for the beauty of a rose.

There are other types, too, of those who are haplessly or wilfully afflicted in appearance; but much that may be said to any one of them applies to all. Care of the health, care of the person, self-knowledge and the application of it in selecting the designs, materials and colours for costumes, all these aid in the attractiveness of dress. So, too, do a cheerful and easy manner, and a regard for the comfort and pleasure of one's fellows.

Let a woman add to her becoming dress a becoming spirit, and not only will those she meets be ignorant that she has been or could be afflicted in appearance, but she herself will be beyond the possibility of falling again into such a state.

CHAPTER XVII

THE HAT AND THE COIFFURE

THE hat and the coiffure go together, let it be understood; and they go a great way, too. In fact, they form the dress for the head, part of which can be laid aside, but the other part should never be laid aside.

They are of first importance in dress, for they dress that part of the body to which the attention is first directed.

It is the face by which we are remembered. And the face is not a picture which never changes — it is always changing and is always affected by its environment, even as a lake is by the clouds that float above it or the ripples that cross it.

The face is an expression first and features afterward.

Now the setting for a part of the body so essentially individual and spiritual should be adapted to all its phases. It must harmonize

or it will distort. The hat and the coiffure form the capstone upon which depends whether the whole structure is artistic or awkward.

They are attractive, too, by themselves, like well behaved twins. In fact, each should be on its best behaviour when by itself, while together each adds to the other's charm. Such qualities, however, come through thought and training. What would the hair be if it simply grew? The very best type of such neglect would be a squaw with a feather stuck in her elfin locks. The hat is a development of this feather just as the coiffure is of the elfin locks.

It is care, then, that does it; the painstaking, discriminating care which suits the material to the face and not the face to the material. When this care is exercised, the face always responds a hundredfold like a bird that sings for the gift of a seed.

But this care must be discriminating, let it be repeated. General directions are of little value. Here each case requires its own good rules.

Where perfection can be so sublime the step to the ridiculous is indeed a short one.

There is danger of inappropriateness. There is danger of incongruity. There is danger of

uniformity. But for all these dangers good taste waves a warning signal.

It doesn't do, you know, to go to a formal five o'clock tea wearing a stiff felt hat with a wing at the side and your hair twisted in an inconsequential knot at the nape of your neck. Nor does it do to go on a morning shopping jaunt in your big picture, plume-trimmed, Gainsborough, with your hair marcelled and a mass of puffs and curls.

Convention counts whether at a picnic or a ball.

It is the element of surprise that most arouses laughter.

It surely is an element of surprise, too, when this picture hat and elaborate coiffure, though properly worn, are accompanied by dingy gloves and shoes run down at the heel.

There must be fitness throughout or it is to laugh.

Then there is the question of age — that perpetual question that must be answered in all dress talks.

Sometimes, and it may be said oftentimes, it happens that on the streets or in the restaurants one's attention is caught by the very latest hat creation which, in Yankee tongue, "beats all creation." One, especially if a

feminine one, notes first the oddity of the new shape and the chicness of the unusual trimming.

It is dramatic. It is audacious. But then comes the shock. One looks beneath for the piquant young face which surely must add fascination to the hat, and alas, one sees the lustreless eyes, the saggy cheeks, and the hanging jaw of old age trying to be young. Really, one feels like repeating the litany.

Then there is the model sent straight from the cafés chantants of Paris. This is a hat that should be seen at a distance and above the footlights and in the middle of an elaborate stage scene thronged with people in order to convey its chic idea. But it is accepted seriously and without any reservation, fairly swallowed, if such a gulp can be imagined.

Think of the slip of a girl weighing less than a hundred pounds who balances this enormity on her head and is proud of it. Think of the fat and lean women of all ages and conditions who look enviously upon her.

This is not a case of the girl wearing the hat, but of the hat walking off with the girl. Verily pride goeth before the fall of common sense.

Yet, this model if properly studied and modified might really prove the artistic life of the new designs.

Behold, too, the apple-faced, chubby woman who really should wear a large sombre-hued hat to give the due proportion.

What is this item from a doll's wardrobe she is so blithely wearing? Perhaps, by means of a microscope or spy glass, we may be able to examine it sufficiently to detect that what might be a wen is really a turban.

But even these examples, bad as they are, are not productive of individual taste. There is a lamentable lack of originality or what is a better word, individuality, in the dressing of the head. A group of penguins on a desert island look no more alike than a gathering of fashionable women. You can't tell one penguin from another, and you surely can't tell one woman from another if you judge her by the hat and hair.

There is a distressing uniformity of puffs and waves and curls, of slinky feathers and towering aigrettes to be seen in the orchestra of a theatre or in the pews of a fashionable church. Each woman, without the slightest regard for her individual attractions or defects, has adopted a set fashion the same as a soldier who enlists must adopt the uniform that is provided for him.

Suppose each one of these women had been



“Is there then a secret to hat success?”

compelled as the soldier is to follow regulations. How she would revolt! Really it sometimes seems that the only way to bring about individuality in feminine dress would be to have laws passed, regulating every particular item of it under heavy penalties. Then you may be sure women would dress as they please and look all the better for it.

Is there then a secret to hat-success? Yes. The hat must be artistic. Styles come and styles go but art remains.

In other words, the hat must be becoming. It must be appropriate. It must fit the person and the costume. It must harmonize with the face. It must conform to the trend of style.

These conditions being carried out, it really makes little difference what the shape, material or the size may be. The woman who wears such a hat wears a fetching hat.

After all, innovations in hats are more apparent than real. It is easy enough to twist a model out of shape, but the basic idea of the model still remains.

As a matter of fact, there are a few hat shapes that are always in style, and upon one of these shapes the fad of the day is founded. The woman of good taste wears the model upon

which the fad is founded with but a suggestion of the fad itself.

Moderation is the golden rule of hat lore. What, then, are a few of these hat types?

First and foremost is the Gainsborough with its glint of romance which time cannot dim.

Then there is its direct opposite, the English sailor, which like its namesake is handy to have around under all conditions. The turban, too, has been a model for ages, and its essential idea has been modified into a hundred different serviceable shapes. What whole races have accepted as almost a sacred style must have some good to it.

Analyze the latest eccentricity from Paris and you are very apt to find at least a trace of one of these shapes in it.

Woman's chiefest glory is said to be her hair. But it is a glory which must be acquired, not one that is conferred. Hair even at its prettiest is raw material. It requires care and taste and art in order to make it the proper setting for the face underneath.

Does it therefore require the expert treatment of an artist? Practically no, because there are no artists. The hair-dresser follows a trade, and in his stock there is no such com-

modity as originality. There are skilful maids to be sure; for the wealthy, but the woman of moderate means must be artist for her own hair.

If she but uses thought no maid can compare with her any more than a nurse can compare with a devoted mother.

When this is done, instead of the hair being something to be fixed, or, let it be whispered, put on, it truly becomes a vital part of the person, sharing in and harmonizing with the individuality through which each one is known.

CHAPTER XVIII

SHOPPING IN PARIS

A COURSE in training would not come amiss if you would shop as you should in Paris. There are certain essentials that must be observed. Concentration is one of them, and having an opinion of your own and sticking to it, too, is another. A knowledge of the French language, as it is spoken in Paris and not taught in the average school is a third. While more important than all is to have a regulation figure, meaning thereby a thirty-six-inch bust and a twenty-four-inch waist. Paris never caters to stout women.

Then courage and strength to resist the most subtle and persistent of flattery is needed and, even if you are able to do this, a purse full to the overflowing.

In a word, there is no place in the world where the American woman needs so much to keep her own wits and those of her hus-

band's female relatives about her as while shopping in Paris.

Of course, there is a reason why one must be so fortified to shop successfully in Paris. And there is; indeed its name is legion.

To the average American woman who visits Paris for the first time there is a glamour, and a glamour of long standing, surrounding the shops and the big dressmaking establishments. Paris is the synonym of style. It is the Rome of the couturier. It is the Holy of Holies of Fashion.

The ingenuous American woman feels as if she should enter the shops and ascend the broad steps of the old palaces, now occupied by world-famed dressmakers, on her knees. Well, after she is back from her pilgrimage, she may still be on her knees — in repentance.

Not to buy what is offered in Paris seems almost an impossibility. The Frenchman is a born trader. He will do about anything, or almost anybody, to make a sale. Often-times his nerve and wily tongue hypnotize the will of the buyer. Besides, goods are not simply offered in Paris; they are pressed, as I suppose properly prepared goods always should be in a way.

There are many sides to the Fashion world of Paris, and many phases to each side.

To the fair Americaine who comes well supplied with American gold, the big doors of the famous dressmaking establishments swing wide open.

For the equally fair Americaine, who comes ill supplied with American gold, there are the department stores and the little shops in the back streets which when ferreted out hold so much that is charming, chic and delightfully inexpensive. It may often prove that patience and judgment will more than make up for this lack of gold.

But, of course, it is the big dressmaking establishments of Paris to which most of the glamour clings. Here, though the doors are wide open to wealth, there is much of formality and much of mystery. The old palaces of the nobility are the centres of Fashion. Here the couturiers of the present day create their new styles and offer them to their often newer customers.

The ancient nobility is a thing of the past, the shadow of a name; but these couturiers form a caste as arrogant and exclusive. They are girted about with form and precedent. It is difficult to approach them; and then, when

an audience is granted, one is expected to hear and to obey — also, parenthetically, to pay.

“The Style — it is I” says the fashion master with all the infallibility of Louis XIV. And he is so cocksure of it that you have to believe it yourself.

Nor is this a wonder. France has been repeatedly swept by revolution. Monarchy, democracy, imperialism and republicanism have all succeeded to power and fallen from it; but the rule of the dressmaker has remained unbroken. It levies a tax on every nation and holds its subjects in every clime.

Who, then are these Princes of the Power of Vanity; these High Priests of Beauty and Charm? Frenchmen and Frenchwomen, the most of them; Austrians, Italians, Russians, some of them; English, one of them; but not one of them is American, nor does one of them know or care for American qualities or limitations or for aught that is American except American extravagance and American gold.

The succession for the most part has been hereditary and progressive; from father to son; from artisan to artist; with trade secrets cunningly devised and kept like a family treasure. Intelligence and skill are at the command of the rulers of these famous establishments, and

also what is far more important, that undefinable something in cut, colour, combination and finish which all women, and most men, the world over recognize as French.

On the other hand, these lords of the needle and scissors have long since forgotten, if indeed they have ever known, that it takes nine tailors to make one man. They take themselves seriously; issuing edicts as if from the throne. They have all the defects of long continued power. They won't modify; they won't change. Take it or leave it, is their ultimatum.

Yet, in many respects, perfection is theirs; the perfection that comes from centuries of thought, experience and practice; the perfection that can be exercised by experts inbred for generations, who live, move, and have their being like their fathers and mothers before them in doing a few things and in doing them well.

The work-people in these great establishments are specialized. They do and keep doing the same work, year in and year out. One little seamstress may make collars or work on sleeves all day and every day. Is it strange that they each reach perfection in their special work?

But now for the rulers, the fashion kings

themselves. Let us particularize. Each year Paris changes, so the influence of one leader is felt more than that of the others. In this way, in time they all have a chance to let their own personalities sway the mode of the day.

Recently, Paul Poiret has been the talk, the very ruling spirit, of Paris fashions. But Poiret is young and his enthusiasm has carried him a bit too far. He is a lover of colour and is original in its use. He lives in much elegance; and his garden with its flower beds arranged in striking combinations and contrasts has come to be as much talked about as his gowns in which the same taste is displayed. His establishment is like a private mansion. The entrance is most imposing, and liveried servants are here, there and everywhere.

It is the artistic side of dress rather than the practical side that Poiret has always considered. Straight effects, simplicity, the high waist line and unusual and marvellous colour-blendings are always seen in his costumes. He is responsible for the harem skirt. This trouser skirt was, indeed, his idea of the practical. It was his step too far, though no one who wore it could take one. It proved a failure, a striking illustration that even genius should keep within its special lines. Poiret

knows nothing about and cares even less for the practical. It is the artistic that he loves and is.

Years ago, when a trip to Paris was being considered, it was always Worth who occupied most the thoughts. The Worth dressmaking establishment is one of the oldest and most historic in Paris. It was the elder Worth who dictated the crinoline and imposed the chignon and treated his customers as a tyrant might his slaves. Since his autocratic reign, the establishment has had seasons when its influence was very slight; but it always swings back into vogue again. The business now belongs to the Worth family and is conducted by the two Worth brothers, Jean Charles and Gaston Worth. There are more ladies of the nobility in Worth's clientèle than in that of any other dressmaking firm in Paris. The specialty of the house is court and evening gowns.

The kings of fashion in Paris to-day have no monopoly of the sceptre. There are queens of fashion, too, among the creators and dictators of the modes. There is the house of Callot, known as the Callot Sœurs. Two sisters, elderly women, run this establishment and exert a marked influence on Paris styles

notwithstanding the fact that every Callot fashion is copyrighted.

Callot Sœurs have many of the most famous actresses among their customers, and many of the richest Americans. They are distinctly French, and their establishment shows it in every detail. Each little fitting room looks like a society belle's boudoir. The walls are covered with silk brocade, or plaited lace net, and the colours of the furnishings are of the daintiest and softest. The mannequins at Callot Sœurs are much talked of for their beauty.

The Paquin dressmaking establishment is one of the landmarks of the Rue de la Paix. The House of Paquin from the exterior looks like a hanging garden of beautiful flowers. The balconies and window ledges are always abloom. The entrance is right off the street, and on this ground floor is a typical French shop, most interesting, where many of the dainty little things of dress are to be found.

Since the death of her husband, Madame Paquin is the ruling spirit of this establishment. She is most ably assisted by Mlle. Claire, her première saleswoman, and M. Joire, her brother. The House exerts one of the most dominant style influences in Paris.

Very near Paquin's, just around the corner on the Place Vendôme, Madame Cheruit has her establishment. She is an extremely charming woman, with a personality which has much to do with her business success. No woman can resist a Cheruit gown if it is first displayed, worn by Madame herself.

Thus, you will see, there is no longer one dress ruler in Paris to-day. The kingdom of Fashion is divided. Where once there was one king, and that king the elder Worth first and then Monsieur Paquin, there are now many princes and princesses regnant. They do not dare so far; but they dare overmuch.

A most important feature, and one peculiarly French, of shopping at these big dressmaking establishments is the manner of displaying the costumes. When the throne room is reached where the model gowns are to be shown, in glide the mannequins. These are the young girls with pretty faces and perfect figures who have been selected as the living forms upon which the gowns are displayed. They are a distinct Parisian class, trained with severity for their work. They are graceful of movement and cunning in all the turns and devices by which the best is shown at its best. Nothing can exceed the fit, the swing, the chicness of

the gowns as the mannequins wear them; for the wearing is as fine an art as the making. So indeed the American woman may find to her cost when the poor little jackdaw tries to strut in the plumage which was meant for one of these rare gay birds rather than for her.

She who would buy a French gown should first be sure that she knows how to wear one.

The American woman, in making her selection, should have the prudence to enforce her individual taste. She has been doing this sometimes during the last few years, and it has influenced Paris styles in no small degree.

The French couturier is cunning first and creative and artistic afterward. For all his arrogance and conceit, he will do anything rather than lose good American money when it is in sight. To use slang, he bluffs; but can be quickly called by a display of nerve.

If his customers from the States now have ideas of their own and insist on asserting them, he will put aside some of his self-sufficiency, and not only listen but yield, a compliance unheard of until recently.

In Paris, even more than at home, women must fight the good fight of taste against trade. The old tyranny is there, still entrenched, as has been shown, behind form and precedent;

but even the strongest castle is vulnerable when the warder has an itching palm.

There is a broad dividing line between the dressmaking establishments of Paris and the French shops.

The American woman during her first visit to Paris has to keep remembering and saying over and over to herself: "These are the much talked-of French shops — the Louvre, the Bon Marché, the Printemps and the Galerie Lafayette," or she will gaspingly fear that she hasn't arrived after all. In no way do they compare with our big, beautiful, luxurious shops. Such a thing as artistic window dressing, for instance, is unknown in Paris. Why should the dealers spend their good money to attract those who are already attracted?

Inside the stores, there is a lack of system in arrangement. The effect is second-hand, however first-hand the wares offered may be. Things seem to be in a jumble. But there is a fascination, nevertheless, to this confusion which comes from the combinations of colours on every side. There is something inspired about the French touch, so seemingly careless. It can do anything with colours except make them not match.

One must remember, however, that this

successful audacity thrives under the skies of Paris and nowhere else. Many a fetching combination there becomes a frightful combination here. May not the glamour of authority have something to do with it? When a queen limps, all her maids of honour limp also.

The comforts and luxuries in which the American shops abound are lacking in the Paris shops. They would seem insane extravagances to the French dealer. It is the customer's high office not his, you must understand, to spend. He takes in, always the shekels and sometimes the spender.

But not always are the customers taken in, unless, as many of them do, they insist and persist in taking themselves in. The shops do show many novel, good and inexpensive things well worth purchasing by the American customer. Hats are invariably fetching in Paris, even if some of them are a bit extreme; and all millinery is cheap there compared with here. Underwear is apt to be a real bargain, while one can pick up silk petticoats and adjustable silk and chiffon ruffles at the most convenient and acceptable prices. All the little accessories of dress also are worth purchasing if one needs them.

Novelties may be found in the French shops,

too, months before they are seen in New York; but the American woman must take pains that she is getting French novelties. Some of them arrive by way of Germany or Connecticut, and are daringly offered as quite the chicest thing out.

“But gloves?” the American woman may ask who is now beginning to gasp without going to Paris. Well, yes; there are gloves both cheap and dear at almost any price. The best ones are superlatively good; the worst ones are horrid. In the general shops they are arranged according to size, and you may suit yourself if you can. The wisest plan is to shun the glove grab-bag of the general shops and go to some standard glove house. There you will find gloves fully as expensive as here, but you will get your money’s worth and more in quality, make, and fit.

Some improvements are being made to-day in the French department stores, just as the couturiers are beginning to pay some heed to individual taste; but in either case progress is slow. Among people who for centuries have been self satisfied and set in their ways, with good reason, such reforms will only come when they are profitable.

CHAPTER XIX

AMERICAN SHOPS AND AMERICAN FASHIONS

IT IS not so long ago that we had neither American shops, nor American fashions in America.

The progress has been from the wigwam to the department store; and from imitation toward independence.

The early colonists sent over their casks of tobacco to their English agents who sent back in turn bales of all sorts of goods.

After the Revolution the influence of the French, who had come to America's aid, prevailed. And to the close of the Civil War, foreign goods and French styles were largely the rule. This rule was tyrannical. Nothing that was made in this country was of any account except as a covering; while the dictum of the French couturiers was as infallible as the bull of a pope. Of course very few women, comparatively, went to Paris for their gowns, but gowns that were gowns either came

from Paris or had the Parisian stamp in some way upon them.

In the expanding years after the Civil War, with manufacture encouraged and wealth plentiful, it was inevitable that the small store should develop into the big store. But the store, however, was still mainly a place for the sale of foreign goods and did not pretend to set up styles of its own. The development was material, but so great that the big store of one year was the small store of the next, one might almost say.

One idea purely American, however, prevailed from first to last and that was to please the customer. The reason why distinctly American styles and fashions were not developed at the same rate as convenience, luxury and a marvellous display of the wares of the world was that the customer had no use for them. It was Parisian or nothing with the American women up to twenty years ago.

There is no parallel to this material development of the American shop except perhaps that of the three-story building of a half century ago into the towering skyscraper of to-day.

The shop of the sixties was a specialized shop. The housewife with many errands had

to go to many shops. The general store was so uncommon that its name gave it a certain distinction. It was, in fact, a citified country store. In the main, each shopkeeper followed a particular line of trade which he understood very well, but being engaged only in a small way, he carried only a limited stock. There were crockery stores and linen stores and woodenware stores and variety stores, but all of them put together would not make a small-sized department store of to-day. These were days of small dealings rather than cheap dealings.

The woman of to-day can exhaust not only her errands but her self before she begins to exhaust the least of the stores. The development indeed has been carried to such an extent that a monstrosity has been evolved in some instances.

Under one gigantic roof covering a block may be found a conglomeration of the commodities of the world — a fair of every nation and of every time resplendent in a brilliancy peculiarly its own.

This conglomeration is confusing to even the experienced shopper of to-day, in fact, it often intoxicates her, and shopping under such circumstances becomes the most confirmed of habits. This woman will give up her friends,

her home and her church, but never, oh, never, her department store.

What, then, would be the mental effect of it upon one of the specialized shoppers of a half century ago could she be transported into the midst of a vast and crowded scene wherein if she had the money and strength she could buy not only everything that she had ever thought of, but everything that everybody else who had ever existed had ever thought of, and a bewildering profusion of unthought of things besides. Talk about dreams or nightmares — it would exceed delirium itself.

Let us particularize a little. You pass from cheese and eggs and milk and little chickens, running around, to sable coats and Gainsborough hats with ostrich plumes. You step from rowboats and tents and fishing rods and shotguns to false hair and dyes and rouge and powders and perfumes.

You turn from pots and kettles and pans to lace-trimmed negligées and embroidered petticoats and nightgowns.

You eat ice-cream amid tropical palms. You turn over the leaves of the latest novel, and have your picture taken while you read.

The skilled physician or nurse takes your pulse. The dentist gives the latest touch of perfec-

tion to your teeth. The chiropodist relieves the fatigue of your feet, and what the beauty specialist doesn't do for you isn't worth mentioning, at least, so she says.

There is the engagement ring, too, for the loving couple, with the clergyman close in attendance, and wedding presents — well, all weddings since that at Cana in Galilee could be amply supplied without need of reducing the inventory.

There is the bank, too, for the young couple's thrift, and the postoffice to take messages of how happy they are; while a little beyond, as is right for the dim future, there are cradles and nursing bottles and complete layettes.

Since there is no question then about the quantity of goods, how about the quality?

Here American pride must look out for a fall. Intelligent foreigners say that American things are made to sell; that once they go off they don't go much farther. There is a certain truth in this criticism. Convenience counts, adaptability counts, appearance counts most of all, but durability is left behind the door.

But this monster store is only the exaggeration of a tendency. The distinctive American store is big, but not too big. It is comprehensive, but it is not unwieldy. It contains

very many things, but they are selected with discrimination and arranged with taste.

The care that is taken for the customer's convenience in America is beyond all praise. It is with pride that we say, too, it is purely American. Nowhere in Great Britain, much less on the Continent, can anything be found like it. The American customer in America is coddled. She sees what she wants before she asks for it. There is invitation to ease on every side.

The foreign shopkeeper is not afraid that his customers may get tired except of course tired of buying. After that he, too, is tired of seeing them around, and the sooner they lug off their purchases the better.

The American shopkeeper, on the contrary, tries to give with a bargain all the privileges of a rest cure and a club.

The danger is indeed that this attractive luxury will be overdone and that shopping will become too fascinating to the American woman.

In time, as these shops kept increasing in stock, ideas purely American of how the goods should be fashioned and worn sprang up and spread. Though at first few and far between, these ideas kept increasing until now the Ameri-

can shopkeeper is coming to have a mind of his own, nor does he really have to go to Paris to know what it is.

Already there is such a style as the American style, though to-day no more than a modified French style. In time, however, the French couturier will have to come to America to know what the style is and then go back home to try his best to improve it.

The fault of imitation no longer lies with the American shopkeeper. He has both a will and a way of his own. It is the American woman herself who still puts a limit on them both. Years ago, as has been said, it was Paris first and America nowhere with her. Now America is somewhere, but Paris is still first.

CHAPTER XX

THE IDEAL IN DRESS

DRESS should be more than a covering or an ornament. It should be an index to character. It should be a picture painted by the wearer with her own hands for public exhibition, showing herself as she would wish to be. This picture at first is an ideal picture, but every woman through thought and the development of her own taste may come to make it real.

Of course, this implies self-knowledge.

Foreigners are impressed by the peculiar attractiveness of American women. They say next to their own women it is the American woman that charms the most.

Now why is this so?

It is because of the infinite variety of the American woman which pleases the eye and holds the imagination. When any large number of women are under observation, attractiveness must imply constant change, for

human nature soon wearies of what is monotonous. If the first, last, and every other woman that the foreigner saw all looked and dressed alike, the first might well be the last for any interest he would feel in them.

On the contrary, what is his common experience? He meets first the tall and stately wife of his club friend, who takes pleasure in introducing him into society. Her poise and elegance are what strike him the most forcibly, and he immediately concludes that the American woman is to be worshipped from afar rather than near by.

Yet, straightway at dinner, he finds himself the escort of a young pretty girl who hasn't any poise at all and who is very well satisfied not to have any. She is so confidential and confiding, and tells him so much on every possible subject, that before the evening is over he feels himself to be her brother, though whether an elder or a younger one he is not at all sure.

But soon he meets the blue-stockings girl, who looks at him critically through her lorgnette and who keeps saying things he fears are sarcastic.

Then, to his relief, he is introduced to a demure mouse-like girl, whose infrequent gaze is soulful and who says but little, but who says

it so intensely. Her effect is restful and restorative. He is quite himself again, when the flirtatious girl, as she is always able to do, has some one or another of her subjects bring him to her side. He is really limp when she gets through with him, and it is only through the breezy out-of-door talk of the athletic girl, who strides by his side like another Diana, that he feels he amounts to something after all.

All this is exhausting and bewildering, yet he remembers distinctively each one of these American types.

And why is this so? Because each one by her dress and her manner emphasized her own identity.

It is well here to note that dress and manners go together. They are inseparable companions. Now if this companionship is unnatural, the effect produced is distressing.

Take the woman in a rich *princesse robe* of velvet with a long train and low cut *décolletage*, and let her romp and giggle! Take the girl in a fluffy chiffon frock decked with ruffles and roses, and let her hold herself stiff and repellent! In either case, don't we all want to get away?

The point, though, to be driven home is

that individuality in dress gives distinctiveness in dress. Does it do more? It might give grotesqueness in dress if the woman does not consider her own charms and defects. It may make her attractive or fascinating if she does consider them and strives to adapt her dress to them.

More and more the American woman in seeking for beauty and style in dress should learn to give two impressions: one of the present style and the other of her own individuality. When she combines these two features with that judgment which comes from thought and study, then there is a union of the best that is fashionable with the best that is personal.

And thus comes about the distinction of American dress.

But, some may say, such independence in dress would lead to confusion, a jumbling together of inharmonious styles. This, however, will not be so if women have minds of their own and use them. There are certain principles in beauty just as there are in morals or religion. The more women think and study, the more they will come to have these principles in common.

The lines of the beautiful are well defined. For centuries this ideal of beauty has been

buried under the rubbish of false styles and freak fashions. When this rubbish is removed, then the beautiful is revealed, just as when the débris of ages is dug from a perfect statue.

How, then, is each woman to have a beauty in dress of her own that agrees with the ideal of beauty?

She must seek the proper line, the becoming line, in dress. This is a conforming of the dress to the figure, as it should be.

She must study colour and learn to choose only such shades as will harmonize with her.

She must dress to emphasize the good and to hide the bad.

She must adapt her dress to her environment and circumstances, so that she will never be taken for what she is not. There is no bird so distressful as the bird in borrowed plumage.

In her painting of her own dress portrait woman must be an impressionist.

It is the effect always and not the material that counts. Sometimes the slightest touch gives character and charm. Why is it that marionettes all look alike? It is because they haven't any little ways of their own.

The human eye is a very imperfect microscope, but the soul looks out through it and sees best what it likes the most. It is hard to

define style, but the eye knows it at once, sometimes finding it in the twist of a ribbon or the fall of a lace ruffle.

Then there is the frame of this picture, which, of course, is the scene in which the woman is placed. She must in her dress become a living part of this scene. It is only in the light operas that a milkmaid in silks and laces is endurable. When the portrait and frame match, then the frock, the environment, and the woman come to belong to one another, which, as all dress experts know, is most desirable.

Such a condition is especially important to the woman whose scant purse causes her to heed all the little economies in dress. She may far better be cheaply dressed and still be herself than richly dressed and be like some one else, for it is herself and not this unknown some one else whom her friends love to see. Besides, who ever does pick a flower to pieces before exclaiming, "How beautiful!"

If price means beauty, then the most beautiful dress should be made of bank-notes.

The poetry of life of which becoming dress is so great a part is beyond price. All may enjoy it who will live it. It is a woman's peculiar mission to give more and more poetry to life and she can do this largely through her dress.

Of course, it is not given to all to originate, but it is possible for all to select and adapt. Let each woman keep her own individuality, and at the same time make the very best of it by her dress.

Let her represent her own life and circumstances by her dress, but at their highest point and not their lowest point.

Let her gladly avail herself of all the thought and taste that have been and are devoted to fashions, but let her wisely take what is fitting, and leave what is inappropriate.

Let her mind dignify her dress and her dress dignify her manners.

Then she becomes an inspiration, and dress has done its perfect work.



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